SELF PUBLISHER!™

★ MAGAZINE ★

THE EDGE COVER STORY SNEAK PEEK AND FACEBOOK CONTEST!!!

INTERVIEWS:

HUNT EMERSON
PAUL RAINEY
TIM PERKINS

NEW CREATORS!

SAME INDIE GREATNESS!

REVIEWS AND MORE!!!

January 2013!

ISSUE 61

FREE PDF VERSION

PUBLISHER

Ian Shires

COPY EDITOR

Ellen Fleischer

CREATIVE DIRECTOR

Jay Savage

COVER ART

Mark Vuycankiat

SELF PUBLISHER MAGAZINE

Well, my head is still spinning a bit from last issue, but we're going to plow into this one on schedule, regardless. I think it's safe to say that we made a pretty decent splash with #60's addition of Jay Savage as Creative Director and the layout improvements he implemented. Visually, we're in a whole new league, and I think everyone is happy that I won't be doing the layouts anymore.

That's not to say the issue was perfect, because it wasn't. We made a number of mistakes, a few of which we fixed, others from which we're just learning. I have to send out a huge "I'm sorry" to Douglas Owen, who was the writer of the Russ Walton interview article last issue, who did not get any credit for it. We're going to be putting up some new guidelines for contributors, to help us keep things like that from happening again. Adalberto's article lost some of the paragraph breaks, and so ended up looking a bit run-on, and that was not his fault. We'll take the blame, it's a big learning curve, but we'll get this going right. I also completely forgot to send Jay the cover thumbnails for the review section... and I've made a few other notes and things I'm going to discuss with Jay before I send him over all the stuff for this issue.

Overall, we've had pretty solid "on the right track" feedback, so I don't think we'll spend any more time looking backward... it's time to look forward. This issue, we are doing something special. The cover feature/sneak peek is also tied into an online contest, which we think is a pretty cool thing to be able to do, and you can all thank Marvin Wynn for the idea. It's been a while in development, and I think we've pulled it off nicely.

We've got a nice mix of other articles and such, even though a couple of our regular contributors have gone silent. I will be beating the drum a bit, to see if we can add to the staff again, so if anyone out there would like to get some writing credits for SP! into their resume, just let me know. As you can imagine, we have a pretty steady stream of subjects we can assign to people for articles, and it's all about getting to know the people making the publications here.

Next issue, we'll be having a cover feature on Tim Kenyon's Capstan Comics. It will officially be the February issue, as I'm giving everyone a couple weeks off after this issue for the holidays. Then, we're looking at a BIG March issue, as that will be the issue of which I'm going to try to get a solid print run done, to take to the SPACE show as a giveaway. It'll require a bit of support from the publishing community to pull it off... but we think it can be done. I've got Chad Lambert on board to be the cover feature for that issue. So, lots of things lining up as we go into 2013. And Jay and I keep tossing around the thought of a new version of Small Press Idol... so we'll see. What do YOU think?

- Ian Shires

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THE EDGE

INTERVIEW & SNEAK PEEK!

SP!: What is your background?

I am a computer analyst by trade and have studied as a creative writer.

SP!: What is The Edge about?

"We have reached the next stage of human evolution. It is an infection that will spread across the globe. Welcome to The Edge. The infection spreads." That is the basic overview of the story.

SP!: How did the Edge get started?

The story actually started when I was in high school, back in 1992. The original story was heavily influenced by Image Comics in the 90s. After scrapping most of what I had written back then, the story took on a life of its own.

SP!: You have fairly large art team working on the comic. How do you divide the work?

I am the writer. Mark handles the pencils. Steven handles the colors. Jaymes handles the letters and design.

SP!: Who is the target audience (all ages, mature readers, etc...)

This is an all-ages book. If it were a movie it would be rated PG-13

SP!: You mentioned in the emails to Ian that it was being relaunched. Is the series being rebooted or re-released as a marketing push for the current series?

I would consider it a light reboot, only Issues 1 and 2 will see any changes. Those changes will be to the colors. Other changes will be to the dialogue.

SP!: When will the relaunch take place?

The relaunch of Issue 1 is set for this coming winter.

SP!: How are you marketing/celebrating the relaunch?

There will be a push on The Edge's website and Facebook page, and promotional material will be sent to comic book stores and to fans.

SP!: Will you continue to distribute through DriveThru?

Yes, the book will be available digitally through Drivethru and other venues.

SP!: Will you continue with the POD version on IndyPlanet?

We will be exploring multiple sources for distribution.

SP!: Issues 1–3 have the Ronin Studios badge on them. What help did they provide, and would you recommend them to other creators?

Ronin provided a community of friendship and resources that were very valuable, both to myself and to The Edge.

SP!: How do you find using a POD printer, in terms, of price, quality, etc?

Ka-blam did a wonderful job with The Edge; I did not have any problems with them. The books came when I needed them and were in excellent condition.

SP!: Will you be attending any events/conventions?

This is TBA. Creators Edge will be at cons and will have The Edge with them.

SP!: Can you tell us about the action figures? Are they one-offs or are they for sale to fans? What is the process for getting them made? Were you happy with the results?

They were created by Loose Collector (http://loosecollector.angelfire.com/) as customs. I am presently exploring options to bring the figures to the fans.

SP!: How much does it cost to get the action figures done?

The pricing is based on tools used.

SP!: What is Adrenaline Rush? Is it a spin off or part of series continuity?

It will be part of series continuity. The story takes place between Issues 4 and 5. There was a story that needed to be told, which did not really fit into The Edge. So, I reached out to a few friends of mine and had them bring in their characters to tell the story. It will feature Matt Spatola's The Venger, John Meytch's Sniper and Rook, and a few other surprises.

SP!: How did you find using Wordpress? Will the new version still be on Wordpress? Is it something you'd recommend for other publishers?

Wordpress and its tools give you the freedom to pretty much create a page any way you want, without a lot of coding. I would recommend it to anyone creating a website.

SP!: What are the "blog roll" and "meta" sections of your homepage for? Is RSS for marketing?

The Blog Roll is a list of links to other, related, pages. Meta is for login features. RSS is for subscriber feeds to get news pushed to e-mail or igoogle.

SP!: Is there anything you'd like to add that we haven't covered?

The Edge's Facebook page will be hosting a contest after this issue of SP! Magazine is released. Ten fans will receive signed copies of a special edition cover of The Edge #1. These ten copies will be signed by the creative team.

Also, The Edge #1 is available to order from your local comic shop and online.

Diamond code : NOV121048
ISBN : 9780983686439

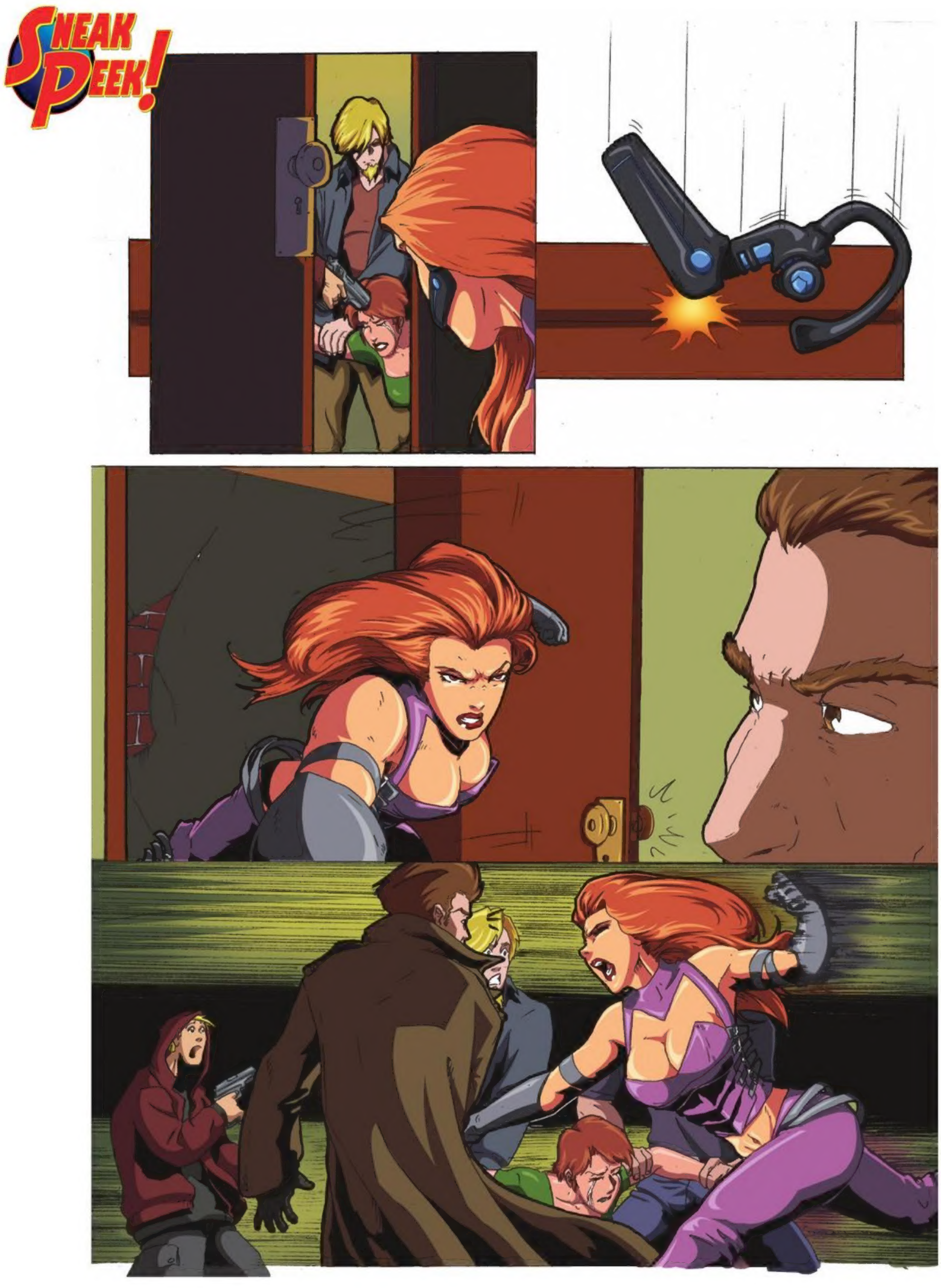
Get in on our Facebook contest and win one of 10 signed copies of The Edge #1. To enter please visit the official contest page at:

http://www.facebook.com/The.Edge.Comic/app_79458893817

SNEAK
PEEK!

SNEAK PEEK!

SNEAK PEEK!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A Liaison with a Large Cow.

HUNT EMERSON INTERVIEW BY: Darren Worrow

Hey man, there's a guy with like, a whole city in his mouth! Who could be responsible for such a bizarre entity? Hunt Emerson, that's who! Britain's legendary underground cartoonist is out and about with a new graphic novel adaption of the first part of Dante's epic poem, The Divine Comedy: Inferno. Sounds even more exciting than a bloke with city in his mouth, doesn't it? I mean, how does one take on such an ambitious project? We'll ask the man himself, we'll go beyond the realms of printed matter with another new direction—the Hunt Emerson App—and we'll try to dig out some of his self-publishing past.

DW: Dante's Inferno seems like a very daunting and ambitious project indeed. I mean, I would have trouble adapting "Disco Inferno" to a comic book, and that's just a lot of people with big hair dancing. How do you go about embarking on such a project?

HE: I was never much into big hair, mine having receded by the time I was 30, and as for dancing…

Knockabout Comics held the launch party for my Rime of the Ancient Mariner comic on a Thames floating bar/restaurant, and Kevin Jackson was one of the journalists/writers invited. I met him there over an inflatable albatross. A few years later, Kevin asked me to work with him on How to Be Rich and How to See, two comic book approaches to the work and ideas of Victorian artist and critic John Ruskin, which were published by the Ruskin Foundation. While working on those books, Kevin and I fell to talking on diverse subjects (KJ is a man of letters, some of them in the English alphabet), and he suggested Dante as a subject for a comic book. Under the influence of wine, and before I realized quite what I was taking on, I agreed.

There followed a period of investigation. KJ is an educated scholar of Dante and has written books on the subject, whereas I was almost totally ignorant of the poet and his work. So, we viewed as many of the other illustrated versions as we could find, and he gave me a crash course in fourteenth century Italian culture and cosmology. He wrote a précis of the work, found diagrams of Dante's conception of Hell, and provided me with a few translations. My fourteenth century Italian is… weak, shall we say. KJ read Dante in the original while working as a night security guard. (For the record, my main source was a modern prose translation by John D. Sinclair, but later, KJ sent me a recent version by Ciaran Carson, which is very entertaining and easy to read. I also referred to the Gustave Doré illustrations, mainly for the way he drew rocks.)

Our initial intention was for Kevin to write the book, but as soon as I started sketching it, I realized that I was going to write it. The characters of Dante and Virgil immediately embarked on a cross-talk repartee in my head, a music hall muttering and complaining, which made me laugh enough to want to draw the pages. Which, for me, is the best creative space to be in. Kevin became my Virgil, keeping me straight on the best track through Dante's very personal version of Hell, and then provided the essay at the end of the book that pulls the whole thing into context.

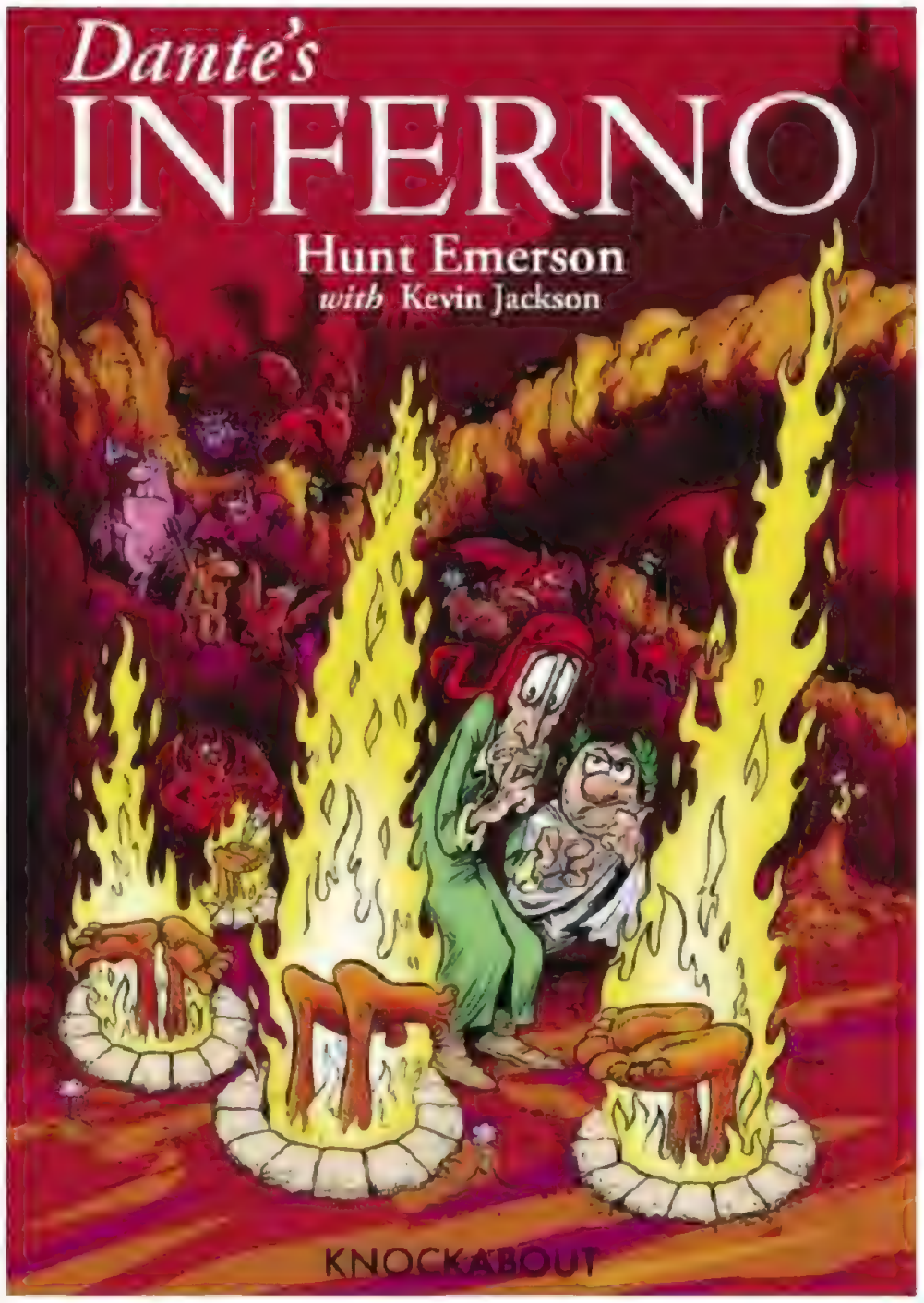
DW: So Hunt, how long has this project taken and how does it compare with your earlier takes on classic literature, like Lady Chatterley and Casanova's Last Stand?

HE: Inferno has taken me five years to do. In some of those years, I drew six pages! But, we are poor, independent publishers, who can't afford to pay advances, so I had to find time to draw it in my so-called "down time". Hollow laughter. On the other hand, I have hugely enjoyed taking time to get the pages right. I deliberately chose to make Inferno a black-and-white line book—no color, or tones, or fancy computer shenanigans. It's all drawing! I'm still a big fan of drawing.

Naturally, I think Inferno is the best book I've done. Lady Chatterley has some good bits, and some innovative work, but it's also clumsy in parts… at, least, I think so. I just realized that it's many years since I read it, as opposed to looking after the

pages of artwork. Maybe I should read the book again. Casanova's Last Stand is a lovely book, with some of my best drawing in it, and some good funny cross-talk dialogue, too. The drawing overwhelms the story at times.

My other stab at the classics is The Ancient Mariner. I still love that



book, because it successfully delivered to me some of my cartooning ambitions. I like to draw sail ships. I like balladry, folklore, and history, and I loved the MAD comics version of Longfellow's The Wreck of the Hesperus, drawn by Wally Wood.

DW: Have you any aspirations to continue with The Divine Comedy, or have you got your eye on another classic?

HE: No. Kevin says that Il Purgatorio and Paradiso are too boring to bother with, and I agree with him.

We have some plans, but I'm not going to tell them now. Kevin is currently writing the Phenomenomix pages that I draw for Fortean Times magazine. (FT—the Journal of Unexplained Phenomena. If you're not a reader, well, you damned well should be!) He's writing a series of mini-biographies of great occultists, which could be a book when there are enough. If we can find the money.

DW: Seeing as this magazine is themed around the world of self-publishing, if I may, can I cast your mind back prior to The Rip off Press, where you worked on many small press titles in the UK?And The Birmingham Arts Lab? Tell us something of this and how they compare with the UK small press scene of today.

HE: Oh, boy! Let's go back to a time before computers, before photocopies, before there was easy access to printing… a time of potato prints. No, not that far back.

My introduction to comics was through American underground comics in the early 1970s, through British underground magazines, and through the British comics, Nasty Tales and Cozmic Comics. I started drawing my own comics, and when I entered the world of work I used every opportunity to sneak access to office photocopy machines in order to make prints of my drawings. I was constantly getting into trouble with my employers, but the lure of seeing my drawings "in print" was strong! I printed up a few copies of my first Large Cow Comix like that—20 copies, maybe, or 30. One, called The Adventures of Mr. Spoonbiscuit was six copies, and so poorly repro'd that it was barely readable. When I worked at the Arts Lab, we had an A3 offset litho press to print programmes and posters for the Lab, and inevitably, we hijacked it to publish comics.

At that time, if you wanted to publish a comic or magazine, you had to go to a commercial printer and have multiple thousands of copies printed. They had to have distribution and high sales to recoup the outlay. Oz, Cozmic Comix and Nasty Tales were a part of the magazine publishing industry. Small offset litho printing was in its infancy, and photocopies were purely an office tool. The idea that you might publish only one or two hundred copies of a small comic to a specialist market, just wasn't possible.

We didn't think of ourselves as "small press," though that's what we were, but we tried to operate as a commercial publisher, printing lots of comics and selling them. Printing a lot wasn't a problem; selling them was. We lost a lot of money for the Arts Lab, but we made some interesting comics and we helped start a "scene". There were other people doing similar projects—Angus McKie and his gang in Newcastle got hold of a printing press and published Either/Or Comics, going through dreadful and hilarious print disasters on the way. They and we were working with technology that we weren't trained to use, and the general funkiness and amateurish bravado of our comics sort of laid the way for the real self-publishers that came a few years later—Eddie Campbell, Paul Gravett's Fast Fiction, Phil Elliott, Ed Pinsent and so on. Photocopy and small press technology had improved to the extent that they could hand-make comics that had an acceptably professional look, but could be made in quantities that wouldn't bankrupt them.

All this seems very much concerned with the technology of self-publishing, rather than the content. I've always liked to be hands-on, and I like the process of making books.

keeping it going, and they're young and enthusiastic. Jim Stewart and his Ganjaman empire is admirable for his sheer work load—loads of pages, all great-looking, bright, and barmy. There's lots more books I like when I see them… I tend to like the ones that are handmade, hand-crafted. Aces Weekly looks good, but that's online… another subject entirely.

DW: What about your influences? I always see a nod to George Herriman as well as British artists like Baxendale and Reid. How did you come across his (Herriman's) work in your youth, and what comics did you read back then?

HE: I read an average number of comics when I was a kid—Beano, Dandy, Topper, Knockout, all that lot, but I wasn't a collector or a fanatic. I remember seeing some Marvelman comics at some point—Steve Anglo, I suppose they were—and they were something different, but I didn't see any American comics. This was in the 1950s—I was born in 1952. Comics were just part of kid life, but they obviously had an influence on me.

The comics I remember more vividly are Andy Capp and MAD. When Andy Capp first appeared it was of great interest around me and my friends—it was about our lives, our back lanes and canals and shipyards. Andy was like—well, not like my dad, but like the dads of some of my pals. Andy Capp was a big boost to my drawing. I copied him like crazy!

When I was nine or ten, I saw a copy of Utterly MAD, which changed my life! It was a paperback book published by Ballantine, which had black-and-white reprints of an American comic called MAD. They were printed so you had to turn the book on its side to read it, and Utterly MAD proved to be one of a series. A kid at school had this book, and there was a pile of kids on it, scrambling to look at it. I forced my way through and saw G.I. Schmoe—a Wally Wood parody, featuring soldiers, tanks, and girls. I was hooked.

I think the fact that I was first aware of a lot of American culture through MAD has influenced my view of it. I knew Frank. N. Stein before Frankenstein, Batboy and Rubin before Batman and Robin, and MAD's version of The Raven before I knew the original, and so I have never been able to take horror movies, for example, seriously. I can't be bothered with vampires, and it's all down to MAD.

Herriman came later, when I was starting to draw my own comics. I read The Penguin Book of Comics, which was my first introduction to the history of comics, including Krazy Kat. I loved the loopiness and poetry of KK, and the Herriman backgrounds I copied have served me well, since then.

DW: Are there any of today's self-publishers that you would like to praise?

HE: Difficult to answer this as I don't see much, I'm afraid. I like Lizz Lunney because she's funny (hey that rhymes!), I like the Inspired Comics group because they're learning as they go along, and

DW: Who of your characters are you most fond of and which ones are still running? Firkin in Fiesta, Ratz in Beano, your long-running page in Fortean Times (and any others I may have missed)...

HE: Firkin is a dear old friend now. One of the good things about having a long-running strip is that you know the characters so well. I don't know if it comes across to the reader, but Firkin is filled with little knowing asides and subtle jokes about the relationships of the characters—Neville Nurd, Charleen Chagg, and Firkin himself. It makes me laugh and makes doing the strips still fresh and fun.

Phenomenomix in Fortean Times is where I get my jollies.I haven't written any myself for a while, as Kevin Jackson has been writing a series of scripts about great occultists, as mentioned earlier. But, at other times, I have to come up with a daft story idea about fish falling out of the sky, or UFOs, or crypto-zoology, every month. After all this time, it's difficult to think of new things. It keeps my mind supple.

DW: They say 'there is an app for everything,' now. I believe there is the 'Hunt Emerson app.' Can you explain this to me and tell us how you feel about embracing modern technology for comic art?.

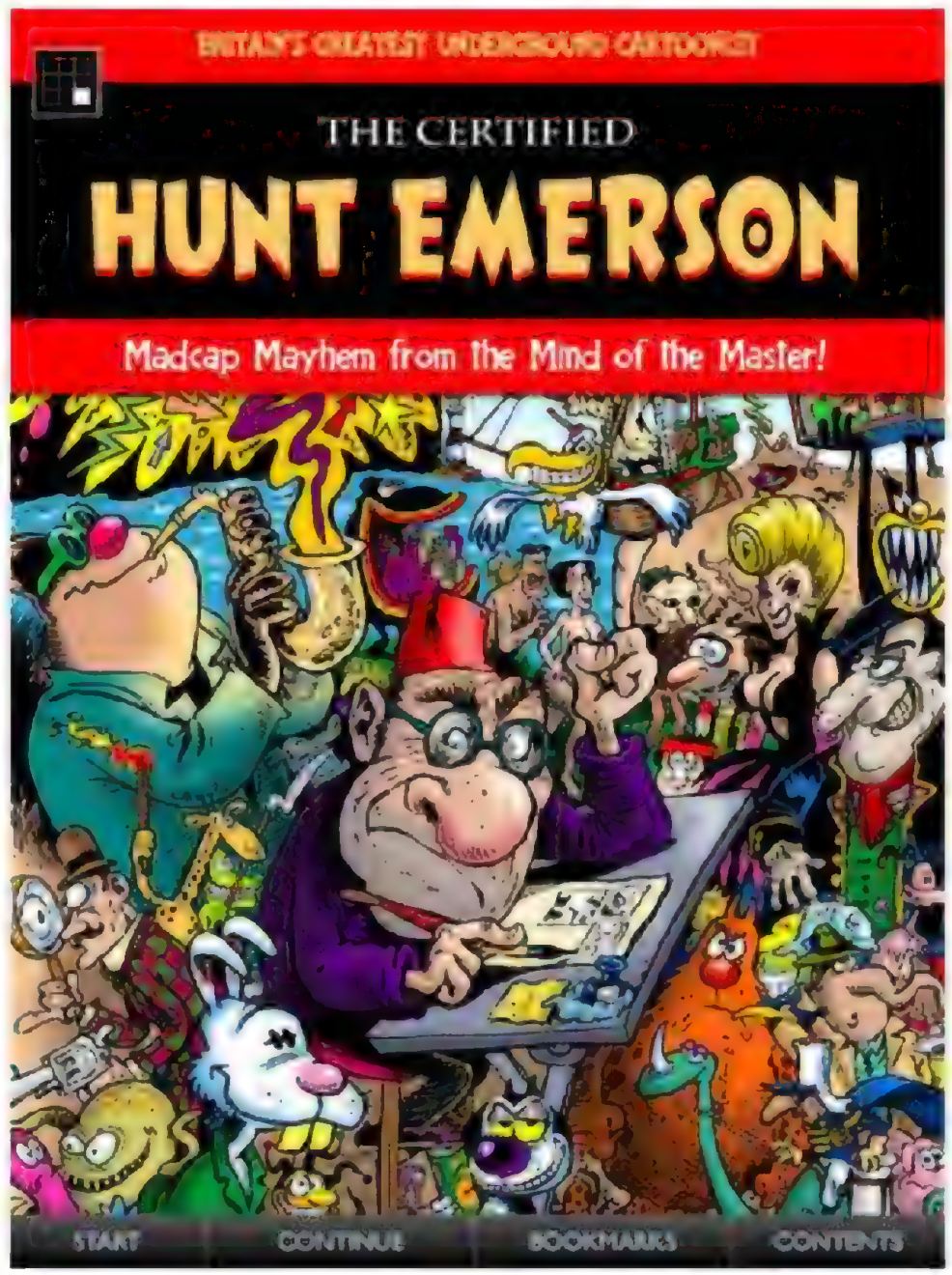
HE: Ah yes—The Certified Hunt Emerson, published by Panel Nine. This was a bit of a surprise for me—I don't have an iPad or iPhone or anything like that, and I didn't really understand what this thing was until it was finished. I hope I get the chance to do a second volume with Panel Nine.

Certified… is like an electric book, an album of my comics, in color and black-and-white, from throughout my career. You can zoom in close to the panels, the stories have all got introductions that I wrote, and some of them have an audio track of me mumbling and muttering about the pages. There's a gallery of my book covers, another with lots of color illustrations and cartoons, and a third of self-portraits. There's a long and boring interview with me, and it only costs £6 or something. I mean—what can I say? It's only available for iPad at the moment, which is a shame, but the interface—the mechanics of how the app operates—are really top-class.

DW: Personally I would like to see some more of Pilgrim and Son from The Festival Ritual, any chance?

HE: I don't think that's going to happen. I think his stories are done now. In part, because the first stories were done when I was the same sort of age as Pilgrim and he was a bit of a self-parody. I'm 25 years older than that character now.

DW: Finally, do you have any advice for aspiring self-publishers that you would like to share? If you'll answer this last one, I will wish you every success with Inferno and let you go!



HE: Phew—I hate this bit… advice? Gawd, I don't know… How about: Don't publish anything you're not sure of, just because it's time for another book. It will hang around you accusingly forever. Take risks when you have something you're excited about. If it doesn't sell, it will still be jewelry on your catalog. Remember—you are there to publish the odd stuff. Blah blah.

Thanks for the opportunity to waffle. None of the above should be held against me.

DW: The pleasure has been all mine, thanks for your time, Hunt, and keep a-doodling!

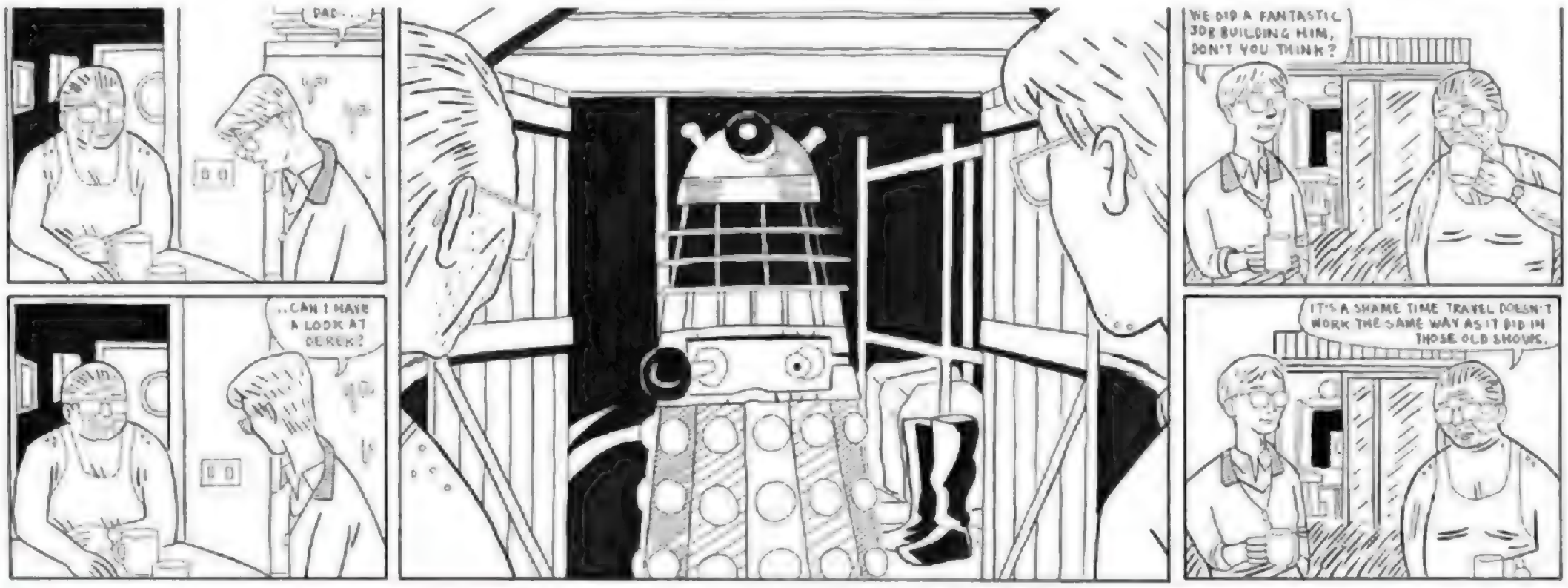
Find out more about Hunt at www.largecow.com

Interviewed by Darren Worrow, www.darrenworrow.webs.com

NO TIME LIKE THE PRESENT TO CHAT WITH PAUL RAINEY.

PAUL RAINEY INTERVIEW By: Darren Worrow

Paul Rainey is that rare thing in the world of the UK small press; he is reliably prolific, delivering quality self-published comics at a tenacious rate over a lengthy period. Not only that, he is consistently funny. In the 1990s, the UK was handed the US format, short-story-based Love Bomb series and the full-story spoof superhero Memory Man, to name but a few. The next decade saw many other projects, including his most-celebrated There's No Time like the Present, which humorously follows a geeky, Doctor Who-obsessed guy, his high- strung girlfriend, and his equally-geeky, internet and Star Wars freak mate. It should be of no surprise, then, that Paul announces that the newly-reformed Escape Books is set to publish this series in graphic novel format. We congratulate Paul when we catch up with him to discuss the new project: a paper and ongoing web-comic, Thunder Brother: Soap Division.


DAD...
...CAN I HAVE A LOOK AT DEREK?
WE DID A FANTASTIC JOB BUILDING HIM, DON'T YOU THINK?
IT'S A SHAME TIME TRAVEL DOESN'T WORK THE SAME WAY AS IT DID IN THOSE OLD SHOWS.

DW: Firstly Paul, I would like to ask you just how long you've been here on the small press scene? Because as far back as I can recall, I have seen you behind that convention table with a smile and a new comic title.

PR: I ran some workshops recently and was surprised to realize while preparing for them, that my self-published comic- and fanzine-making goes all the way back to 1980. However, the small press scene, as I understand it— where making comics isn't enough; you have to get them out in front of an audience too—I think that started around 1994–95 when I produced my very first Memory Man full-length comic.

DW: Also, we congratulate you on this well-deserved announcement that Escape will publish There's No Time Like the Present. Tell us how this came about and, perhaps, a little about Escape.

PR: When I finished writing and drawing TNTLTP after six long years, I contacted a few people I knew for advice on how to approach proper publishers with it. My intention while serialising the comic, if I ever finished it, had always been to do this. Approaching pub lishers with comics and pitches has always seemed like a mysterious art to me— one I'd never been successful at. Anyway, one of those people I contacted was Paul Gravett. Paul replied and said that he and Peter Stanbury were planning to bring back Escape, and asked if they could publish the collection.

To have my graphic novel published by the people who published early work by Eddie Campbell, Neil Gaiman, and, more recently, a collection by The Pleece Brothers, feels very flattering to me.

DW: I've always thought that "There's No Time Like the Present" is a bit of a vague title; could you elaborate on the narrative for us?

PR: It's a story about a group of friends with varying degrees of geek tendencies and their relationships with each other. They live in a world, more specifically a Milton Keynes, seemingly very much like our own, except that time travel has been invented. However, although the world has undeniably changed, most people's lives are more dull and less eventful than before, except that now they have access to the 'ultranet,' a sort of four-dimensional internet from which they can, for example, download films from the future.

DW: I also see you have made a collaboration with some great comic creators on the UK scene: Dan Lester, David Baillie, Francesca Cassavetti, Sean Azzopardi, and Sally-Anne Hickman, to name but a few. Tell us more about this?

PR: Four or five years ago, my friends

Francesca Cassavetti, Dan Lester, Sean Azzopardi, Sally-Ann Hickman and Oliver Lamden decided to attend Angouleme ,and they thought it would be a good idea to put together an anthology of comics created by themselves and other UK-based cartoonists to showcase there. I was one of the people that they asked to contribute. Two anthologies were produced in total, and they were called BASTARDS, which stands for British Artists Standing Tall And Reaching Distant Shores.

DW: What can you give us of your past, your influences, and, of course, the question I always ask: what comics did you read as a kid?

PR: I started reading comics because I liked Planet of the Apes and Marvel UK published a weekly based on that. I quickly started buying other comics they published, and fell in love with any Silver Age work I came across drawn by Jack Kirby and Steve Ditko. Over the next few years, I began to spread my comic reading net wider to include DC (The New Teen Titans) and proper UK comics (Action and 2000 AD). The eighties were a great period of comic discovery for me. Just when I had thought I had seen all there was that comics had to offer, let's say indie comics (Love and Rockets, Lloyd Llewellyn and Neat Stuff), I would find something else, such as newspaper (Peanuts) and small press (Escape).

DW: Onto the latest project, is Thunder Brother the first time you've used the web as a medium? And what can our readers expect to see when they pay a visit?

PR: Lazy people, me included, describe Thunder Brother: Soap Division as being like The Truman Show, but in reverse. Imagine all of your favourite TV soap operas are real—if your favourite TV soap operas are British. The stories are told from the point of view of the organization that secretly films the lives of these worlds' populations. Or more specifically, from the point of view of Thunder Brother and his fourteen-year-old apprentice, Sally Timmins—whose job it is to protect these worlds from unofficial external influences.

TB:SD isn't my first internet strip. A few years ago, I posted a panel a day from my diary strip, Book of Lists, online. TB:SD is, in part, my tribute to Sunday newspaper strips that I have enjoyed (re)encountering in recent years. I would love for people to be so excited by a new page of Thunder Brother: Soap Division on a Sunday morning that they race to read it, just as I imagine people did in the past for Peanuts, Popeye and Calvin and Hobbes.

DW: Thank you Paul. Do keep us posted on the publication date for your graphic novel. One quick question to finish: Memory Man, have you forgotten him?!

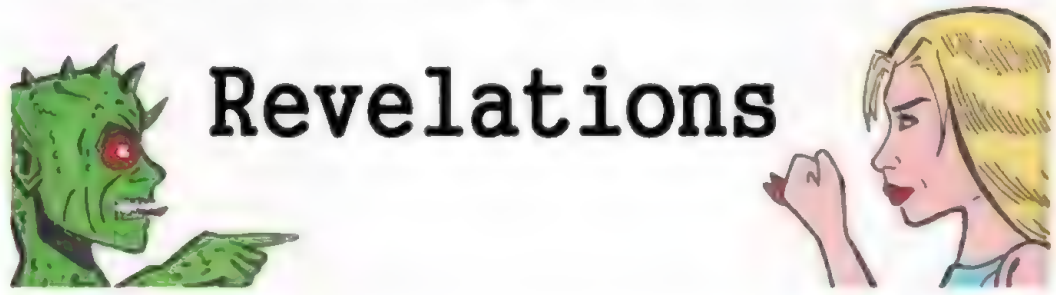
PR: A friend recently discovered a box of unsold Memory Man comics in his loft and returned them to me, which I was gutted about, as I thought I had got rid of all the bastards long ago. I used them as lures at comic events. You know, "Buy a copy of Thunder Brother: Soap Division and I'll give you a free copy of Memory Man." People still respond positively to it, which is nice. Although I feel that my artwork has improved, I occasionally daydream about producing an affordable TPB collection of all the stories. Every couple of years, I see a copy

listed for sale on eBay, which I find really amusing. "Good luck with selling that, pal!" I've been tempted to bid myself, once or twice, but then I remember that some other friend probably has a box of copies in their loft to dump onto me when I least expect it.

More about Paul's work can be found at: www.pbrainey.com.

Interview by Darren Worrow. www.darrenworrow.webs.com

http://hereafterpress.ecrater.com



SNEAK PEEK!

SNEAK PEEK!

COME ON... PICK UP. COME ON..
THANK GOD YOU'RE THERE. IT'S BURDEN. WE'VE GOT A SERIOUS PROBLEM...
THEY FOUND OUT. I DON'T KNOW HOW. BUT THEY DID
LISTEN TO ME! THEY PUT THE ENTIRE FACILITY ON LOCK-DOWN FOR TWELVE HOURS. I MANAGED TO DESTROY MY NOTES BEFORE THEY SEARCHED THE LAB.
I INJECTED MYSELF WITH THE SERUM. I HAD NO OTHER CHOICE! THEY WOULD HAVE FOUND IT! THERE WAS NOWHERE ELSE TO HIDE IT
SOMETHING'S WRONG... I... I DON'T KNOW. THE SERUM.. IT'S UNSTABLE. I DON'T KNOW... THERE ISN'T MUCH TIME...
I MIGHT HAVE BEEN FOLLOWED... HAVE TO GET OUT OF SIGHT. I NEED YOUR HELP. YOU'RE THE ONLY PERSON I TRUST.
GET A TEAM DOWN TO OUR USUAL MEETING PLACE FULL CONTAINMENT I DON'T CARE... DO IT! I COULD BE CONTAGIOUS OR WORSE... GOD HELP ME...

SNEAK PEEK!

come on, baby... make a wish...

MAKE A WISH, MARY, MARY, QUITE CONTRARY. BIRTHDAY WISHES ARE VERY SPECIAL. YOU ONLY GET ONE A YEAR, SO WISH FOR SOMETHING EXTRA-GOOD!.

I WISH DADDY WAS HERE! I'D GIVE ALL MY BIRTHDAY WISHES FOR THAT!

OH, BABY.. I KNOW YOUR DAD WISHES HE COULD BE HERE, BUT ALL THE BIRTHDAY WISHES IN THE WORLD COULDN'T...

THIS USED TO BE OUR PLACE. IT MIGHT NOT LOOK LIKE MUCH, BUT EVERY FRIDAY NIGHT...

WE WERE SITTING IN THIS BOOTH WHEN YOUR FATHER ASKED ME TO MARRY HIM. HE LOOKED SO NERVOUS. I COULDN'T SAY "YES" FAST ENOUGH...

I MISS HIM TOO, BABY... GUESS WHAT, BABY? YOU KNOW WHO TOLD ME HE'D STOP BY TO WISH YOU A HAPPY BIRTHDAY?

KNEW IT WAS YOU AS SOON AS I SAW THE LIGHTS DIM. I WASN'T SURE YOU'D MAKE IT...

SNEAK PEEK!

I WOULDN'T MISS YOUR BIRTHDAY FOR THE WORLD, CONTRARY CONTRARY, QUITE MARY.

HOW DO YOU DO IT, PERILOUS? SAVING THE WORLD ON A REGULAR BASIS, YOU STILL HAVE TIME TO SAVE MY WORLD IN A QUIET DINER...

WE HAVE QUITE A HISTORY IN THIS QUIET DINER.

I REMEMBER THE TIME YOU TOOK THE SALT SHAKER, POURED ALL THE SALT ON THE TABLE, AND STARTED WRITING CHEMISTRY FORMULAS WITH YOUR FINGER.

SENIOR YEAR YOU ACED THAT EXAM THIS TIME, I'M PACKING GIFTS, NOT BINARY COMPOUNDS

OH MY GOD! WHERE DID YOU FIND THIS?

I CAME ACROSS IT A COUPLE WEEKS AGO

I WAS SO DOWN THAT DAY BEFORE YOU SHOWED UP...

MOM TOLD ME DAD WASN'T COMING... SHE COULDN'T BRING HERSELF TO TELL ME HE WAS IN JAIL.

HERE YOU ARE, THIS BIG SUPER-HERO... WHEN YOU PLANTED YOUR FACE IN MY ICE CREAM, I COULDN'T STOP LAUGHING

MOM LOOKS SO BEAUTIFUL. SHE WOULD HAVE BEEN FORTY-FIVE THIS YEAR..

I MISS HER TOO.

I HAVE SOMETHING I WANT TO SHOW YOU ..

SNEAK PEEK!

YOU'RE AN OLD PRO AT THIS. T-MINUS 3 . 2...

WHOA. NO MATTER HOW MANY TIMES YOU TELEPORT ME SOMEWHERE, I CAN'T GET USED TO THE FEELING... ZERO TO SIXTY STRAIGHT INTO A BRICK WALL

MONTAUK POINT... I'VE ALWAYS LOVED LIGHTHOUSES. A GUIDING LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS... LIKE YOU

I'M MORE OF A GUIDING DARKNESS IN THE LIGHT. SPEAKING OF WHICH, THE REASON I BROUGHT YOU HERE...

IT WOULDN'T BE A BIRTHDAY...

WITHOUT CANDLES

MY GOD, THEY'RE BEAUTIFUL. TURNING DAY INTO NIGHT... YOU SURE KNOW HOW TO MAKE A GIRL FEEL SPECIAL.

I'M NOT THE ONLY ONE WHO SAVES PEOPLE. I'M A STRANGER IN EVERY SENSE OF THE WORD. THE KINDNESS YOU AND YOUR MOTHER SHOWED ME...

WHAT IS IT? WHAT'S WRONG?

UP IN THE SKY...

SNEAK PEEK!

CHOPPERS MILITARY CHOPPERS.. HEADED TOWARDS MANHATTAN..

GOD... NOT ANOTHER ATTACK..

STAY HERE. I'LL COME BACK FOR YOU..

PLEASE, DON'T LEAVE ME...

OUT OF THE QUESTION. YOU'LL BE SAFER HERE.

I FEEL THE SAFEST WHEN I'M WITH YOU.

AS SOON AS WE GET THERE, YOU TAKE COVER DO YOU UNDERSTAND ME?

GOD IN HEAVEN

this isn't happening.. this isn't happening..

ARE YOU OKAY?

GET AWAY FROM ME! GET AWAY BEFORE IT HAPPENS TO YOU TOO!

THAT TEARS IT LIKE IT OR NOT, I'M GETTING YOU OUT OF... CONTRARY? ARE YOU OKAY?

I FEEL WEIRD... I... I'LL KILL YOU.

WHAT?!

I'LL KILL YOU, PERILOUS! I'LL KILL YOU!!

CONTINUED NEXT ISSUE

COMIC REVIEWS

Policy: Dimestore will print reviews from just about any source available. It is our hope you will get an idea if a book is worth pursuing, and hopefully, go out of your way to get it.Our review system is managed online, so if you want anything reviewed, you will need to at least be able to send an e-mail... although our reviewers are authorized to collect things for review in person. Dimestore reviewers should have cards or copies of SP! to show that they are indeed who they say they are. Our reviewers are instructed to be reviewing for the READER, not the CREATOR... so we are sorry if a reviewer does not give a review that would boost your sales. Reviewers are ranked and given clout by reader votes online, and we won't print reviews for long from someone whose reviews people aren't finding useful. That said, we also instruct our reviewers to give constructive feedback and not be mean. Everyone starts somewhere, and SP! Is set up to be one of the first places a publisher may get a real review. Join our team! If you wish to have YOUR reviews featured in these pages, we would love to add you to our reviewers list!

01 Chelsea Baker Daily Comics Volume 2

Review: The main co-organizer of the Olympia Comics Fest in WA writes and draws a web comic on a daily basis. It's a fun exercise for her and it gives her an alibi for what really happened on any particular day. Dating back to the latter half of 2009, it's quirky and some of the 4-panel daily strips are pretty funny. It's quite old-school in look and feel, taking us back to this reviewer's day in the 80s. —WB

48pg ledger size, side saddle-stitched, B+W, Published early 2010. Written, drawn, and published by Chelsea Baker. Contact info at chelseathebaker.com

02 Earthbound Comics The Stars #2

Just as The Stars return to the spotlight as the world's most famous super-team, we learn the horrible origins behind The Three. As the reunified team premieres in front of a collection of politicians, celebrities, and paparazzi aboard the heroes' space station, The Three launch their attack. While the recent actions of The Three are investigated and their enemies press forward with their plan, The Stars learn that they may have a traitor in their midst!

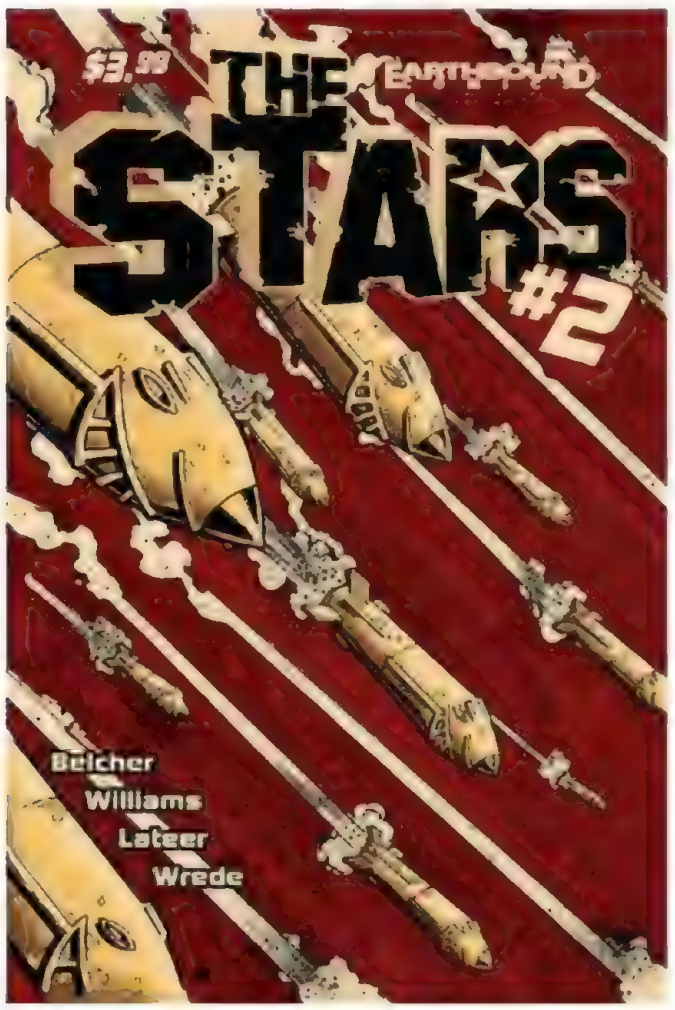
Review: This is a grand story, and it's almost firing on all cylinders. It has a few things that go THUD in it, though, so let's get those out of the way. First and main thing: the alternating use of vertical and horizontal pages in this book make it hard to read on a computer. I wouldn't like holding it in my hand as a printed book, either; having to turn

pages sideways to read has always bothered me. Another thing that kept me from fully engaging was the artwork flaws. In some places the art is much better than others. Facial constructions and poses that don't work pop us out of the flow of the story. That's something this title will really need to work on, moving forward.

Now, for the good: the overall power and complexity of the plot and pacing is enjoyable. I'm not reading something I haven't seen in some story or other before, but there is enough originality to the characters and personality in their interactions, that this does work, and is interesting. So, yeah, this has some things to work on and think about, but it's something I'd read more of, too, so I'll give it a "Check it out" wholeheartedly. —IS

21pg PDF. Full Size, full color comic. First published 2012. By Kurt Belcher, with Bill Williams, Stuart Berryhill, and Ken Lateer.

Order online for $.99 at: http://comics.drivethrustuff.com/product/107962/The-Stars-%232



Main EnterprisesThe Comic Creators Community Spotlight #1

Comic Creators Community Spotlight #1 features an interview with creator Joe Martino and spotlights several independent comic book writers and artists.

Review: It's funny for one publication to review another, but this is a rare opportunity I wanted to jump at. Jim Main should be complimented for giving the world one more publication to highlight independent comic book creators.

In this premiere issue, he interviews the inspirational Joe Martino. Martino introduces his new comic, Titan, and he discusses his inspirational fight with cancer.

Comic Creators Community Spotlight also features creator profiles (such as the amazing artist Tom Ahearn, and writer Robert Sodaro), comic strips, and snippets from comic books. Also, Main discusses Christian comics (a sub-genre of the Independent Comic movement), and Red Anvil's "War of the Independents."

The independent comic book industry needs more publications like this. I have said that comic book creators are the "norm" in the world of comics. Let's face it: there are more writers and artists (like the previously-mentioned Martino, Ahearn and Sodaro) of a certain status than say the Alan Moores, Geoff Johnses and Neil Gaimans. Yet, many of the news sites focus on the Moores, Johnses and Gaimans. While that is not an indictment of the comic book industry, it is a fact.

36pg Full size, B+W w/color cover. First printing, Fall 2012. Edited by Jim Main.

Available online at: www.mainenterprises.ecrater.com, or mail $4.80 to: Jim Main 13 Valley View Rd., Brookfield, CT 06804.

OUR REVIEWERS: Wade Busby (WB)—wadebusby@netscape.net, Carson Demmans (CD)—cdemmans@sasktel.net, Ian Shires (IS)—Ian@dimestore-productions.com, Don Smith (DS)—donsmith1974@yahoo.com

WANTED

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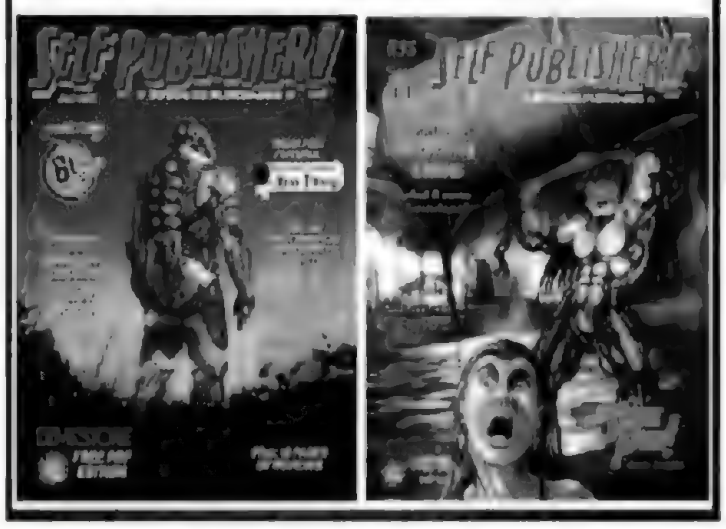
Basically more of everything.

SPA itself is looking for someone to help build and run the Hall of Fame system

The SPA and SP! Magazine are run by volunteers - so sadly we cannot pay you. No experience necessary. If interested contact: SP@dimestoreproductions.com



RICHARD SANTOS
ARTIST, PHOTOGRAPHER, DESIGNER

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TIM PERKINS

At the Junction of Worlds End : An interview with Tim Perkins

Interviewed by Darren Worrow

WOW. JUST LOOK AT THIS PLACE... NOW THAT WE'RE THROUGH THE CLOUD COVER...
I NEVER FOR ONE MOMENT IMAGINED...
YEEP! YEEP!
AYE. IT'S BEAUTIFUL!
PITY WE AREN'T HERE TO SIGHTSEE!
WE'LL LAND OVER THERE SOMEWHERE. AS NEAR TO THE SPOT ON THE MAP AS WE CAN GET

DC, Marvel, Defiant, and 2000AD have all seen the amazing talent of artist Tim Perkins, but now he's out there on his own with a self-published graphic novel series—Worlds End—a curious mixture of sci-fi and fantasy, humour and action. The first volume is available now, so I thought it best to catch up with him before he gets his head down for the next installment.

DW: I want to start by praising the amazing artwork of Worlds End, but first, can we take a quick Tardis trip back to your youth, Tim? Have you always dreamed of being a comic book artist?

TP: Hi Darren! Thanks for those kind words; I am glad you think so. Yes, I guess I first realized and started expressing the idea that I wanted to create comic books when I was about eight years old.

That dream stayed with me all throughout my school days, continued through my time at art college, and carried on once I finished

my time there, until I finally had some work published. That said, the support offered me by my family and close friends throughout that period of my life was often not given the same support by those in the educational institutions under whose tutelage I studied.

During my time at school, my parents and I were often told that one day I would grow up and get a "real" job—well, I did both. Again, while at college, although in a much less derogatory way, my lecturers attempted to dissuade me from my path to the world of comic books.

Thankfully, I stuck by my guns, and managed to fulfill my dream and became a comic book creator.

DW: Prior to your Worlds End project you have worked for the masters: DC, Marvel, and 2000AD. Can you tell us something about what you did there?

TP: Yes, I consider myself very fortunate to have worked for most of the big players in the field of comic books. It also means I have been able to work with and alongside some very talented people, during that time.

COR. NOTHING EVER HAPPENS ROUND HERE. ALMOST WISH I WAS BACK AT SCHOOL IN THE CASTLE... ALMOST.
WHOA. LOOKS LIKE THE WEATHER'S GONNA CHANGE. I THINK I'LL MAKE MY WAY BACK BEFORE IT BEGINS TO POUR!
PUFF! PUFF!! PANT!!!
UHNN!
BEST COME INSIDE A WHILE, LAD, 'TIL THE STORM BLOWS OVER!
YOU'LL NEVER GET HOME IN TIME TO MISS IT. IT'S A FAST ONE... AND NO MISTAKE!
SOMETHING'S NOT QUITE RIGHT...
PASS ME MY CLOAK, LAD! GEEK, GET ME MY CANE! THERE'S TROUBLE A'BREWING...

In the early eighties, I began to pick up work from Martin Lock's Harrier Comics, and while doing this, I met up with most of the crew that would become the main force of Marvel UK in the mid-eighties. There was a brain drain over a period of about six months, at the end of which, we all found ourselves working for Marvel.

Marvel Comics was the first major company I managed to get work with, and I started with a two-page story entitled "Metempsychosis," which I both wrote and drew. It was published in Mighty World of Marvel #14. This came about from an internal Marvel advert, asking any prospective comics creators who would like to see their work in print in a Marvel comic to send a short story, which would then be looked at by the editorial staff and might see print, if it was deemed good enough.

Thankfully, mine was, and to my amazement and relief, it opened a door for me. My complimentary copy of MWOM #14 arrived with a Marvel Comics compliment slip attached, stating that, if I still wanted to, I could arrange to show them my portfolio of work.

The next morning, I rang the editors up and told them I would love to come down. I arrived at their London offices just before lunchtime, the very next day. There, I met with the editorial staff, and also met with Barry Kitson who, back then, was working on a Marvel UK version of Spider-Man. After being taken for lunch, Barry asked if I would like to do some sample inks over his pencils, to which I agreed. The sample pages were sent in, the editor liked them, but no work came from them.

This happened, perhaps, another couple of times over a six-month period (during which I was still creating pages for Harrier), when I received a telephone call from Barry, who was behind on a deadline on Transformers #50. He asked if I could help out inking some of the pages, but it was so close to deadline (this was Thursday and the pages had to be into the Marvel offices by Monday), that I would need to go down to his place to work on them. It was a no-brainer for me, as they say, and the rest is history. I immediately received my first official commission inking Kev Hopgood on an issue of Zoids following this, and I found myself in the door at Marvel.

I worked on a huge list of different characters on almost every title they put out during the mid and late eighties. It all seems pretty much a blur now. I was young, with a young family to support, and I suppose, I just couldn't believe my luck. One time, I had a Thundercats cover to ink and my wife was in the labor lounge of the hospital, expecting our second child, Simon. I inked the cover beside my wife in the hospital bed.

Following on from the work with Marvel, I worked for numerous other publishers, pencilling and colouring, as well as inking; first with London Editions, and then 2000AD. This time, it was John Ridgway who got me the gig. I had been inking John on Doctor Who for Marvel at the time. As well as inking their books, I had also begun to color some of their covers. John liked what I had been doing and wanted help to color his Judge Dredd pages. This was at the time that 2000AD was changing from black-and-white and mechanical drop colors to full color. There was a lot of back inventory of black-and-white artwork, which needed hand coloring. I was fast and so, got the work to fill the new color version of the comic with colored pages. I remember receiving a telephone call off Will Simpson one evening, saying how much he liked the work I had done over Colin MacNeil's artwork on Chopper, which became a graphic novel for a time. While working for 2000AD, I also created a number of black-and-white and full color "Future Shocks."

I HAVE A BAD FEELING ABOUT THIS! I CAN FEEL IT IN MY BONES. AND NO MISTAKE!
WOW!
YEEEPP!
SEEK COVER, LAD! RRUUUUNNN!
I'M ALREADY GONE, OLD ONE!
YYYEEEEPPPP!

Between 1983 and 1992, my client list of publishers grew, and about twelve months before I began living and working in New York for Jim Shooter's Defiant Comics, I began to get work from DC—this time, also pencilling and inking. I probably worked for DC for around twelve months, perhaps a little longer, but then, following a meeting with Jim Shooter and Janet Jackson at the 1993 GLASCAC convention, I found myself being whisked off to New York to Defiant Comics' Manhattan offices, where I worked for a little over nine months in two back-to-back stints, doing pretty much a bit of everything. As well as the fully-painted comics, I soon found I was asked to help out with inking, pencilling, and plotting,—it was a totally wonderful period of my career and, I guess, the high point for me in comic books.

And then we saw the 1994 comic book crash in the USA. I was lucky and survived throughout the mid and late nineties unscathed by the crash. Although, sadly, I saw a lot of brilliant creators fare a lot less well.

DW: Worlds End falls into the fantasy genre. Besides the obvious Tolkien influences, there are also elements that look like some thing from 2000AD and even a quirky feel, which reminds me of French BDs. Is that a fair assumption and did you read many BDs as a child?

TP: Yes, it is—well spotted. If I had been able to do exactly what I wanted to upon entering the comic books field, I would have been doing exactly this kind of work all along. Although I loved my time working on all the other books, it was never really what I wanted to do, what I set out to do. At the time, it was just the only route to creating comic books.

As well as drawing, I wanted to write and create the characters and worlds which they inhabited. That never happened. In fact, the piece of artwork that has gained me the most work, although not re-creating that same kind of work, is now a Giclee print published by Wizards

Keep, entitled The Little House in the Woods. It's a watercolour painting from 1981 and depicts a quaint, little, red, fantasy, mushroom house in a woodland landscape. This single piece got me lots of work—just not in that genre or vein.

I read Tolkien at around the time I was making the transition from junior to high school, or primary to secondary, as they say nowadays. I was also starting to see and read things like Robert E Howard's Conan, Michael Moorcock's Hawkmoon and Elric, and lots of other SF and Fantasy books, as well as just about every comic book I could get my hands on at the time.

By 1977, the new launch of 2000AD had happened alongside the arrival of the first Star Wars film. I loved those early stories with their tongue-in-cheek shock endings, along the lines of the old EC comic books. It was around this same time that I saw a few issues of Heavy Metal and an art book entitled Masters of Comic Book Art, in which comics creators such as Barry Windsor-Smith, Frank Bellamy, Richard Corben, Philippe Druillet, and Moebius showcased their works.

I also managed to find two English-language versions of Philippe Druillet's work. I was in my mid and late teens by the time I saw these, while I was at art college. They were my introduction to the European comics scene, although it wouldn't be until years later that I would see BD books in any amount while on holiday on the continent. Most of my BD reading has been within the last ten years or so, and a lot of this has happened due to internet shopping and meeting up with European creators at conventions.

Another influence comes from Japan. My first taste of anime was back in the sixties or seventies—a cartoon entitled Marine Boy. That little cartoon stuck with me, and I think some of the faces and actions had a profound affect on my own art.

Some of the earliest remarks about Worlds End, when I first began to show the artwork on the internet and at conventions, was about how it had a European and manga look, with a dash of Jack Kirby dynamics, for good measure. This was music to my ears.

DW: It must be tricky not to follow the clichés of such well-trodden ground as other Tolkien inspired fantasies. I mean, something like Jeff Smith's Bone uses the cute element to add humor. So, how else do you bring about a fresh approach to the genre with Worlds End?

TP: What I have tried to do with Worlds End, and the fans and readers seem to adhere to this ideology too, is fuse Science Fiction and Fantasy into a term I have created for the marketing of the books called "Science Fusion." I like the term because, not only does it seek to explain what the genre is, but also, because of the fact I have tried to fuse the styles of UK and US comic book creating with that of Europe and Japan. This isn't to say I make a conscious effort to do it, but it is just so obvious in the art style I am using here, and it is something that is quite natural for me to do; it just happens when I am drawing the books.

Humour is definitely a big thing with Worlds End. In my storytelling, I am a firm believer that, to make something funny, it has to be seen alongside something either frightening or sad, and vice versa. So for every serious moment—and in Worlds End there are lots of those—there has to be humor. It's my take on the yin-yang thing. Everything has its opposite, and it's seeing these opposites that makes the storytelling work.

Aside from that, I do try to use some clichés which I think will work and avoid most others at all cost to try to keep it fresh for myself, as much as for the readers. From the responses of the readers, it seems to be working too.

The stories seem to write themselves, and I often say to fans that it feels a little like the characters of Worlds End are actually using some psychic force to recount their saga to me.

DW: Who inspires you when you are writing, and is writing a relatively new thing for you, when compared to art?

TP: I have always written, but mainly for myself, until recent years—aside from copywriting. My first professional writing was when I had become disenchanted with the comic book business in 1999 and left to pursue a new career path as a concept artist in the world of themed rides and attractions. It was while working in this capacity that I was headhunted to help start up an animation company, which would see me produce, pre- and post-production artwork, storyboards, color key artwork, story art, character, prop and background design, layouts, and writing, as well as everything else. It also gave me the opportunity to be involved with high-flying meetings—something, which would be priceless for me when I started Wizards Keep. Although I produced a huge amount of artwork during this period, it was actually my storytelling and writing that got me the gig there in the first place.

The money was much better than any I had earned in comics, but I still wasn't satisfied with my role in these new creative worlds. In the theme park game, and in animation, no one sees your work— they see the end product, so you never get to hear what the public thinks of it, only of what they think of the rides, attractions, or animations. I needed that feedback and while I was between some TV concept work, I decided I wanted to tell sequential stories again. I guess, really, I had never wanted to stop. But this time, I wanted to be allowed to tell my stories exactly the way I wanted to.

As far back as when I was in my mid-teens, I had envisioned having my own publishing company (even down to the name 'Wizards Keep') and producing my work in book format, although only the Europeans were

doing so at the time. So, at the start of the 2000s, finding myself needing a vehicle through which to tell my stories, and realizing none of the big publishers would allow me to develop the concept, I set about creating the new company. While setting things up for the business I began working on a concept I had created back around 1987, when I was working for Marvel: Worlds End.

As for my writing influences, I would say Jack Kirby in his Fourth World books has had a profound effect on my writing. A lot of folks say he wrote stilted dialogue; I don't agree. His dialogue is not theatrical, but it is melodramatic when it is the gods speaking. His normal folks speak naturally. Other influences, as I have already mentioned, include Tolkien, Robert E Howard, and Michael Moorcock.

Having read so many books and comic books, and seen so many films, these are the most obvious influences, though there must be others, too. Our creative brains act like sponges and can call upon a limitless supply of ideas, concepts, stories, dialogue, etc. The only limits are our own imaginations and our abilities to tap into them. We are the sum total of our experiences, so some of the stuff in our work is from real life, as much as it is from our understanding of fantasy. I have always been fascinated by accents, both colloquial and foreign, and the way folks speak to each other; old and young rich and poor, etc, etc.

DW: Am I right in suggesting that Worlds End is something you have self-published? If so, what are the benefits, if any, of self-publishing, compared with your experience with the big comic publishers, and why did you choose to go down this route?

TP: Yes, Worlds End is published through my company, Wizards Keep. The main benefit is that I am able to keep total creative control of my vision for the books, so a committee never dilutes the concept. The characters react the way I envision it. They speak how I think they would, and this is an important aspect of the books. I employed the guy I reckon is the best editor in the business, James Hill, to edit my graphic novels with me. My main remit for him, other than the normal editing chores, was to make sure that all my characters spoke "in character." I even devised a chart for them all, stating how they spoke and applying this even to their accents, ages etc. It was quite a comprehensive thing, and this helped James enormously.

The second main benefit is, obviously, the control over merchandising my characters and stories. This then leads to the obvious monetary benefits: quite simply, any money made by Worlds End and its derivative products goes directly into Wizards Keep.

The most obvious thing negative—at least it was in the initial days of setting up the business—is that working for another publisher means (by and large, at least) that you get paid for the job upon completion

of the job, or in the case of books, incrementally. Whereas, when Worlds End was to go into production, no payment would be due until we hit a point where we had sales from the books. This was the entire premise behind the business plan for Wizards Keep. Some folks didn't get why we had other products for sale before the actual Worlds End graphic novel or album came out.

ALL RIGHT, YOU LOT - SECURE THE PERIMETER! TIE THE LINES AND SECURE THE BARGE!
COME ON! COME ON! LOOK LIVELY! YOU BUNCH OF LOW LIFE SCUM! GET A MOVE ON!
THE SUN SETS IN SIXTEEN HOURS. WE HAVEN'T GOT ALL DAY, YOU KNOW!

The reason I chose this route in the first instance was, as I said already, because it was something I had wanted to do since I was in my mid-teens. In the second instance, it was purely down to the fact that I knew that, for numerous reasons, there was little or no way to get one of the big comics publishers interested. They don't really allow any creators to own their work. They don't allow total control of a creator's work to remain with that creator. They are not, for the most part, interested in new work, especially creator-owned, when they have their own franchises.

Now, three things alone would have been enough to put me off approaching one of the other publishers, but add in my experiences speaking to lots of other major "name" creators that had work in their portfolios far better than anything they had ever had in print. Those same creators would also tell me they were just portfolio pieces, which would never see print. You can see my predicament. I had two choices: join their ranks and produce stuff which would never see the light of day, or take a chance and risk everything to make the dream real. I had done this once, without any of the knowledge I now had when I first made the leap to become a freelance comic creator, leaving my secure graphic design job behind. I just needed the sanction of my wife, Margaret, and I would take the second route. She agreed and backed me 100 percent, and here is where we find ourselves today.

DW: Are you aware that Worlds End is a district of West Berkshire, near Newbury? I have been there, but saw nothing of the wizards and alien warriors that appear in the sample pages of your graphic novel, rather a rather dull landscape with the busy A34 on the horizon. I guess this, then, was not the inspiration for the story; can you tell me what was?

Yes, there are numerous places with that name: the place you cite, along with several pubs and restaurants, schools, design studios, and other places abroad, too. The plan is to touch base with these folks over the next year or so, and see what that brings to the mix. It's all part of the marketing for the business plan.

The inspiration for Worlds End comes from several sources, really. Like I say, I originally came up with the concept in the form of the original drawings of the characters, some of the craft they use, and lots of notes, way back around 1987, when I was working for Marvel. The concept and idea, though, are far older than that. It is the place itself that has the longest history with me.

Back when I was around twelve years old or so, in the days of flairs, long

hair and progressive rock music, at the back of one of my schoolbooks, was a list of recommended readings. One of those books was entitled The Well at Worlds End. Well, that title, fueled by the addition of the film The Vikings, my books on Norse mythology, Jack Kirby's Thor comics, and the idea that, back in those dark days, folks actually thought the world was flat and they could fall off the edge of the world if they sailed too close to it, gave me an image in my head of a place I wanted to create and have people visit with me.

Then, a little later, I began to see recurring imagery along the lines I was thinking; Hawkwind's album cover for Warrior on the Edge of Time, and Roger Dean's Yes album paintings are just some examples. It seemed that there were regular reminders to me that I wanted to create a story around the concept of a place on the very edge of the world.

This imagery stayed with me all through my teenage years, until I finally got around to fleshing out the concept, while working at Marvel.

So, the story began with a place developed into a world, and was finally fleshed out with the characters who lived there.

Ssss! QUICKLY! GET THEM. WE MUSSST!
SSSTOP, CREATURESSS! SSSTOP. YOU MUSSST!
YEEEEPP!
DON'T... WORRY... I'M NOT STOPPING!
KEEP... PUFFE GOING, LAD!
BEST NOT - AND NO MISTAKE!
UGGHH... WHOOOAA!
PUFFE
CATCH THE OTHERSss! THISss ONE, TO ME LEAVE!

DW: So, normally, this would be the point where I ask what you're up to next, but I assume that, because we are at the first volume of Worlds End, you are busy planning another. When do you expect to complete this, and how many volumes do you envisage releasing?

TP: Yes, that's exactly right. I am presently pencilling Worlds End, Volume 2: A Hard Reign's Gonna Fall. Alongside this, I am pencilling a Worlds End Colouring & Storybook, which is due for publication in time for Christmas 2012, and some brand new products, which I am very excited about and, which are in development on the merchandising side of the business.

The second volume is all written, including all the extra pages. Some of the editorial pages have reached the final design page stage and some of the illustrations have been fully digitally painted. The cover has been designed and some of the strip pages have been pencilled, while others are laid out, ready to be tightened up.

At the moment I write these words, I have the cover to the Colouring & Storybook at the layout stage, ready to see finished pencils produced. On the computer is a completed spot illustration for Volume 2, which is also going to see print in MaltaComicCon 2012's calendar, where I am a guest again this year.

At the side of the drawing board are several partly- and a couple of newly-finished pencilled pages for the coloring book, which I have been working on this week.

As for a release date for the second book, this has not been confirmed to the public yet, as we are still a way from being complete. Stay tuned in for more details, as they say.

This particular story arc is set to see the saga told in four volumes. Volume 3: Don't Fear the Reapers and Volume 4: Stairway to Evaann—Close to the Edge will complete this storyline.

DW: So, no other projects in the pipeline?

TP: I am writing a children's storybook at the moment, too—which I will illustrate. Again, this is an old idea, which I have been waiting to develop fully. The storyline of this book is really for a younger audience—although like with all good children's books, I hope some adults will pick it up for themselves when it is published.

The story and characters have not yet been publicized anywhere, and you are one of the first to hear about them. Once the final draft of the storyline is complete, I will start to illustrate the book. The final size of the the book will determine whether I produce it between volumes of Worlds End, or after all four books are completed.

Other than that, occasionally I will accept commercial commissions—it depends what the job is, what it entails, and who the publisher is. I also allow a little time every year for private commissions to be undertaken for fans, where I produce one-off pieces of artwork for them.

As for the rest, that is always an open door and that's an aspect of what I do that I really like; it keeps things new and exciting for me.

DW: Thank you very much for taking the time to chat with us Tim. We wish you all the best with Worlds End. Before we go, is there anything that you would like to mention that I stupidly forgot to ask?

TP: You are more than welcome. Thank you for a great set of refreshingly-different questions.

Yes, I would like to add here that folks can check out both Wizards Keep and Worlds End at: www.wizards-keep.com and www.worlds-end.co.uk, to follow our progress and check out our products, the Worlds End, Volume 1: The Riders on the Storm trailer video and the first seven pages of the graphic novel. The graphic novels and other merchandise can be purchased through the shops on both websites.

Folks can also follow my blog at www.wizards-keep.blogspot.co.uk, and our FaceBook and Twitter pages; links to these can be found on the sidebar of the blog. For further details, email Wizards Keep at: mail@wizards-keep.com or gweldar@worlds-end.co.uk for a reply straight from Worlds End itself.

I would also like to say that John Ridgway is putting together newly-colored versions of Ken Reid's Fudge the Elf books; they are gorgeous. Anyone wishing to hear how to obtain a copy of the books should drop me a line and I will pass on their details to John, who Is also working on some creator-owned graphic novel projects, Frontiers, Wereworld and Alternate Earths, as well as digitally coloring his Age of Heroes books.

DW: Thanks Tim, keep doodling!

TP: Thanks again and I will do this for as long as I am able.

Interviewed by Darren Worrow. www.darrenworrow.webs.com

Zines, Minis and Art Comics

"A zine (pronounced "zeen," like "magazine") is a self-published, small circulation, non-commercial booklet or magazine, usually produced by one person or a few individuals. Zines come in all shapes, sizes, topics, and formats. Most zines are photocopied, but they can also be printed offset, like a magazine or newspaper. Zines range from hand-written and sloppy, to cut-and-paste (text pasted on top of background images), to artsy with handmade touche,s to produced on a computer with a professional looking layout. Zines may incorporate screenprinting, linoleum cuts, and hand-stitched bindings. Most zines have print runs of a couple dozen to a few hundred copies."

Zines 101 by UndergroundPress.org

Many people who used to make zines out of necessity—when it was the only affordable way of publishing their work—have now moved to different mediums. Print on Demand, short run professional printing, web-comics and digital comics may have supplanted the DIY zine for many publishers, but there is still a vibrant zine culture. Zines have their own conventions, collectives and distribution networks, and use some standard small press comic (e.g. "local talent" sections in comics shops) and arts-and-crafts marketing and sales routes.

Are the internet and advances in printing killing off zines? No. At a time when comic book shops are being squeezed financially and many don't stock self-published and small press tiles, the internet is an extremely useful tool. It provides access to worldwide markets and sales platforms for these—usually very niche market—publications.

Also, some zine-makers provide free digital versions of their zines for readers to print and assemble at home (useful for keeping the postage costs down, especially if the reader is overseas). Of course, SP! Magazine itself has a printable download version, and could be hand-decorated, bound and otherwise personalised by its readers.

The vast majority of those who are still publishing zines do so out of personal preference. The accessibility of the format is sometimes cited as the reason for iyt endurance: 'anyone can make and distribute a zine'. In places where internet access is censored; zines can be hand-drawn and photocopied, or hand-copied. Others use them to make their publications more personal, or as a showcase for artisan crafts.

SP! spoke to some zine makers and zine collectives about their publications, and their takes on the zine market.

The Bear Pit

The Bear Pit is an open forum for comic and zine artists in the Bristol (UK) area. They publish a series of zines and hold the Bristol Comic and Zine Fair.

Interviewees:

- Esme (El Sub Star): ES
- Simon Moreton: SM
- Nick Soucek: NS

SP!: What do you think is the appeal of handmade zines and comics?

ES: It's such an accessible format. Anyone can make one and there are no rules or limits when it comes to content.

SM: I think it's also about self-empowerment. You can learn a lot about yourself and the world making art, and DIY publishing removes a lot of the barriers to doing that.

NS: I feel that is worth mentioning that we actually get photocopiers to do most of the work, rather than making each one by hand— much like large-scale publishers. By self-publishing, however, we are not tied into cost-benefit analyses in the same way. We enjoy creating things, and those who read them enjoy reading something that isn't made for the primary purposes of financial gain.

SP!: Do you think that now people make handmade zines and comics out of personal preference, rather than necessity?

ES: These days, it's a bit of both. The big publishing houses are still difficult to get into, so a lot of people don't try and take matters into their own hands, by making and selling comics and zines. Another point to consider is that publishers can hold a great deal of creative control, so if you prefer to call the shots and collaborate with whoever you choose, it may be a better option to self-publish.

SM: I also think that the decision to make art in the first place— self-expression and the desire to write or draw or whatever and share it— isn't always a choice; I personally see that as an existential necessity. Some people need to make things.

NS: I entirely agree with Simon. I'd also add that, for some creators, the larger-scale publishing isn't an option, simply because it achieves something different. In publishing something for a small market of Bristol-based folk, for instance, it doesn't necessarily make sense to scale up from the small-press, self-published scale.

SP!: How do you think technology has affected handmade zines and comics (internet, print-on-demand, web comics, digital comics and printable zines, wider audience, social media) Has it harmed or helped?

ES: I think these forms of technology are absolutely a good thing. They provide so many options and tools for creativity. It's inspiring to see what other comics artists are getting up to, and so easy to get your work out there. Having said that, for me, reading paper comics and holding beautifully-bound books in my hands is much better than seeing things on a screen. We are always open to playing around with the materials we use to produce Bear Pit. Issue #3 has a reverse-printed acetate cover, which looks really great. You don't get interaction with the finished publication like that online.

SM: I agree with Es. Why reject new technology and all it can afford you, just for the sake of it? It not only changes the way you access art and people, it also changes your options of how to make art. It has a lot of potential. But, like Es, I'm a print person, too. I think we all are. You get a richer relationship with what you're doing, from drawing, to page, to staple, to reader, because it's something material to which the reader can relate. I still think digital work often misses that kind of tactile relationship, though the sharing and community capacities are invaluable.

NS: Before printing-press technologies were developed, texts and images would have to be copied out by hand. The photocopier, a more recent but still relatively-old technology, saw the emergence of zines as we know them. Digital affordability has meant that the process of putting together a zine might be a bit different (e.g. easier, cheaper, and higher quality). The final product, as a tangible thing, has changed little.

SP!: How did the Zine Fair go? Will you have more of them?

ES: Yes. Bigger and better! We hope to incorporate talks by comics artists and workshops in the next one.

SM: And bands. I want a proper launch party next year!

NS: It went very well, with a great atmosphere throughout the day.

SP!: Do most zine makers sell their publications, or trade with each other?

SM: A lot of people involved in Bear Pit are part of the UK small-press scene and sell work online or at fairs, but I also do a lot of trading to get hold of things I'd like to read, and to make friends with the makers. I think most people are open to that, too. I'm not sure if trading is as prevalent as it once was, though, because you can look online and feel like, perhaps, you've already read something. This technology thing goes both ways…

NS: Every zine- or comics maker/distributor is different. Some travel far, and so need to cover their costs. Some rely on the supplemental income (be it for themselves, or for a particular cause). Some, maybe, aren't so into reading others' zines. We keep the zine fair free, so as to make it as inclusive as possible, and I think that helps to encourage people to feel that they can trade without having the stall-holder overhead to meet.

SP!: What is The Bear Pit zine about? Is there a theme for each issue?

SM: Bear Pit is a themed anthology zine, featuring comics, illustrations, and sequential art from a range of creators who have a connection to Bristol. We established it to create a community of like-minded people in Bristol and to showcase everyone's work. Some of our contributors are just starting out in self-publishing, others are more established. It's a showcase in some ways but it has its own message about DIY art, self-publishing, and the value of self-expression.

SP!: Are you looking for submissions for the Bear Pit zine?

ES: Bear Pit is a pretty social affair. We like to have the opportunity to meet up with contributors and have a pint, so being Bristol-based makes sense. We have spoken about starting a sister publication to include contributors from elsewhere; Bear Pit International; so to speak. We still need to look at logistics for that.

SM: for now, I think the party line is that the work or the creator has to have some link to Bristol. We're soliciting for contributions to Bear Pit #5, right now. The theme is 'Expedition'.

NS: The link to the submission call-out for #5 is on the site at: http://bearpitzines.tumblr.com/post/35766439166/reminder-submissions-to-bear-pit-5

SP!: How many copies of each issue of The Bear Pit zine do you print?

SM: That has varied a lot over time, depending on whether we're using someone else's photocopier, printers at home, or a professional printer. Nowadays, we aim for the 50–100 mark. One of the big challenges for any DIY publisher is printing enough to make it cost-effective, but few enough that you don't have boxes of them cluttering up the place. We're fairly happy for them to go out of print as we move on to future issues, partly because it's a rolling showcase, and partly because we've always talked about having a 'best-of' issue one day, that comprises our favourite pieces to date.

SP!: Where do you sell them? You have your own website and the fair. Is there anywhere else?

SM: It varies. We sell them in a couple of shops in Bristol and London. Some places, like Orbital Comics in London, do an amazing job of keeping an eye on stocks and sales and paying up—other times it can be difficult. I reckon distribution is the biggest challenge to the small press scene.

NS: We also encourage contributors to distribute the zine themselves, be this in shops, or to family and friends. As Simon has noted, distribution is hard work. That's one of the advantages to paying a publisher: they do all that for you. By sharing the distribution equally amongst us—including contributors—for small print runs, it all seems to work out just fine.

Weblink: http://bearpitzines.tumblr.com

Jenny Robins

Jenny Robins is an illustrator and artist based in London. Her works include ink drawings, portraits (mixed media and watercolour), zines and greetings cards.

SP! What is the zine What Birds are Really Thinking about?

JR: My obsession with birds started in 2007,

when I did a book of illustrated short stories based around the Magpies rhyme "One for sorrow two for joy.," Shortly afterwards, I spent three months in New Zealand and got more into drawing birds there, as they have such amazing bird life, diverse and much less shy than the birds in the UK, who've had many more thousands of years to get used to humans. The What Birds are Really Thinking zine came out of that obsession, and also just out of a desire to mess with your expectations and be a bit quirky. Not many people know that ravens are thinking about Louis Vuitton handbags, so there's an educative element to it too. I guess I was inspired, in part, by work like Martyn Warren's Velcro Cows book, and others where he makes mock popular science about amazing animals, but my take is more colorful.

What Birds are Really Thinking: 6 pages (plus covers), A7 , mixed media,

SP! How did you make the zine?

JR: The pictures in the zine are very multimedia, including elements of ink, watercolour, pen and collage. It's printed on a single sheet of A4 and folded to create the six pages and cover.

SP! How many copies were made?

JR: This is an ongoing edition, I print them on request.

SP! Are you planning to make more art comics?

JR: Yes, I have made a number of different things which fall into this category since What Birds are Reallly Thinking, some examples are my Because You'rr Worth It mini zine, which is a compilation of some alternative and collage valentines cards I made. I also did a comic last year for Solipsistic Pop, and I'm currently working on a comic combining found text with drawing, which I'm hoping to feature in StoryHands Presents, next year.

SP! You do a range of artwork: political illustrations for Epolitix and Amelia's Magazine, portraits, logos and cards, too?

JR: Yes, I'm pretty eclectic. I think most creative professionals have to be versatile to make a living, rising to the challenge of diverse briefs and opportunities. There's also an element of diversity in my personal (self-initiated) work, which stems from just my tendency to be interested in anything and everything. At any time, I have lots of ideas for projects I'd like to be doing, as well as the ones I'm currently working on. I trained as an illustrator, so that's how I tend to think of myself, but I suppose, only a part of what I do creatively fits into that bracket. I also do portraits, pet portraits murals and anything people ask me for. Last, week I did a big painting of a couple sitting on the back of walrus, wearing sexy cowboy outfits and this week, I'm making Christmas cards. Creative people always have to walk this line between being flexible, adaptable, and having a recognisable style or brand. But I think really you should be able to turn your hand to anything, and usually your personal style will show through in the work.

SP! Now, your Facebook Project; you're drawing ALL your Facebook friends?

JR: Yes, yes I am. I'm up to H. It's a big undertaking and it's going to take me a while yet, but I'm determined to finish and have never regretted starting this project. It connects with a lot of issues around the way we interact with people today, the way we present ourselves online, and it has been an invaluable self promotion tool—not to mention, a lot of fun. Sometimes it's stressful—when I really want to do my friends justice, or feel guilty for not being more in touch—but that's part of it and part of why I wanted to do it; to deal with that stuff, too.

Weblinks:

- www.jennyrobins.co.uk,
- www.etsy.com/shop/jennyrobins,
- www.facebook.com/pages/jenny-robins-illustration/369957903691

Muchacha

Muchacha is a series of zines of various lengths, created by Daisy Salinas. "A quarterly fanzine that seeks to promote the "F" word feminism, encourage involvement in the DIY music/art community & inspire participation in grassroots activism."

SP!: What are your zines about? Feminism, but also race issues and homelessness?

DS: When I say that they are about feminism, music/art, and activism, these are all umbrella terms that include different forms of oppression, which I call "isms and phobias". These would involve racism and classism (homeless rights). One of my aims in my fanzines is to depict an intersectional form of feminism, which, I believe, is the only real feminism. I do not think one can successfully examine one form of oppression without examining others, including race, class, sexuality, ability, age, size, etc.

Details: page count, etc....

SP!: How do you make your zines and what materials do you use?

DS: My fanzines are very influenced by DIY punk zine aesthetics,

which are usually cut-and-paste, black-and-white, and photo-copied. So, to put it simply, I basically take white computer paper and horizontally fold it to create a medium-sized zine, which, I believe, would formally be called an A4 size. The materials I use include pens, markers, magazines, scissors, glue, stickers, and I recently began using glitter. The majority of the writing is typed, so I use a computer and printer. Luckily, I have free access to a scanner and printer at my university, so it is pretty accessible, and I feel fortunate to have these materials available at my fingerprints. Additionally, when I scan my finished copies, I save them as PDFs, and this way, I can keep reprinting them or sending them to people. I can't imagine the patience it must have taken zinesters who were creating zines pre-internet. I have enormous respect for them.

SP!: Where do you sell your work?

DS: I sell my fanzines on Etsy. (www.etsy.com/shop/muchachafanzine) Etsy has an astonishing collection of zines, and it has opened up an entire world of networking for me. I also promote my work on my tumblr (muchachafanzine.tumblr.com), and on wemakezines (wemakezines.ning.com/profile/DaisySalinas).

SP!: You mentioned that you trade zines?

DS: Yes, trading zines is something that has become popular on the internet, at least, since I began making fanzines, a year ago. When I first started out, my fanzines were free, and I was just handing them to family, friends, and acquaintances, in class or at shows. Though most of them liked my zines, I felt really isolated, because I did not personally know other zinesters and really desired a community. I then heard of the We Make Zines Network and found zinesters from all around the world. The different groups on the site, such as "feminist zinesters," "social change zinesters," "women of color zinesters," and more, allowed me to learn about all of the interesting and important work being put out there. Before I knew it, I was trading zines with people everywhere between New York and California. I was even trading with people from Latin America, different parts of Europe, and Australia. This was only the beginning. After a few months, I created a tumblr and an Etsy, and have traded zines with different people through those sites, but We Make Zines is, for me personally, the best place to trade zines with others. I have stacks of zines I have traded with others. I have even made a couple of pen pals through trading.

SP!: Do you find a lot of people like to download the PDFs and print/assemble the zine themselves, or do they tend to read it in its digital format?

DS: People usually have just traded zines with me or bought my fanzine, but on my tumblr I have told people that they can get free

PDF copies from me. Every now and then, I get e-mails asking me and I send them all the PDF copies they want.

SP!: You're a member of the We Make Zines network. Do you find it a useful tool for marketing and distributing your zines?

DS: As I said, We Make Zines is the best way to trade zines with people. However, for marketing and distribution, I rely mostly on Etsy and Tumblr. I've noticed less and less people marketing their zines on We Make Zines. For example, on the feminist group, there used to be people that would post their zines or a call out for submissions pretty regularly, but this has really slowed down. It seems to me that zinesters are beginning to use Tumblr and Etsy, along with other social networking sites, more so than We Make Zines. I wish it was still being used more, because I find the site really useful. With Tumblr, it is sometimes more difficult to find feminist zinesters, because you really have to endlessly browse the tab page and sometimes, just by random chance, stumble onto a really cool zine Tumblr page. At We Make Zines, it is easier, because of the specific groups and because everyone is a zinester or zinester lover. It is more specific, as opposed to Tumblr, where you really have to look for others to market and distribute your zines to.

SP!: You mentioned on your Tumblr page that you are looking for submissions for the zine. What kinds of things are you looking for?

DS: I am looking for anything. I am pretty laidback about submissions. As long as nothing is sexist, racist, classist, and so on, I am pretty much down for whatever. I feel that this way, I am not taking away from anybody's creative process. I have even accepted work that I did not necessarily 100 percent completely agree with, but I think that it's important to have other points of view heard—especially younger women who are often ignored, and one of the only ways they feel they can have a voice and express themselves and be heard is through zines. Personally, I had a weird experience once, when I submitted some of my work to a zine. Because my work was not academic enough for the editor's standards, she completely criticized it and tried to tweak it, as if I were turning in an academic paper. I am okay with criticism, but I was not informed that my vision was going to have to be compromised. She basically wanted me to change the entire thing. As a woman of color who had something important to say about racism, I felt that my voice was being disregarded and silenced. It was a very elitist experience for me, and I decided to not change my work and have since not submitted to that zine. This is why when I receive submissions, I add them all (the ones that fit, first come first serve), unless they are discriminatory against someone's identity. I do not want anyone to feel that what they have to say is not important enough and I would never want to silence anyone.

Submissions and any queries can be sent to Riotgrrrl56@yahoo.com .

SP!: Do you find a lot of people confuse "feminists" with "feminazis"?

DS: Unfortunately, I have had to deal with this ignorance for the past five years, ever since I first considered myself a feminist. I think a lot of it has to do with the media. When feminists are brought up within the media, they are usually portrayed as angry, unattractive, man-hating lesbians who don't shave. I am not saying that being a lesbian or not shaving is a bad thing, at all. I'm just saying that this is how the media sometimes categorizes all of us. From the news, film, TV, and music to the internet and magazines, feminists are misconstrued, and it becomes a burden when you always have to be defending your position. I am very fortunate, because I have a really great support system. When I first became a feminist, it was a lot harder, because I only had one other feminist friend. Now, most of my friends consider themselves feminists, or they at least understand feminism. It is crucial to have this kind of community when the dominant culture completely misunderstands you and makes you feel like shit for simply believing in gender equality. I think a lot of it has to do with ignoring privilege. When sexism gets brought up, I find that some males become extremely defensive. It's not as if we are saying that every man is sexist. We are saying that some are, and that we should recognize our own privilege and be in the fight against the unfair power structures that negatively affect our lives.

SP!: What does Riot Grrrl mean to you?

DS: Riot Grrrl to me is something that is not easy to put into words. The first time I ever heard about Riot Grrrl was my freshman year in college, when a classmate gave a presentation about the movement. Everything sort of clicked for me. I always knew that I wanted to help others, and I knew that the world was fucked up, but I just didn't have the words to describe these feelings. I didn't have the language accessible to me. Riot Grrrl made feminism accessible to me. It was written in a language that I could relate to and understand. I first started out listening to the pioneering Riot Grrrl bands like Bratmobile, Bikini Kill, Heavens to Betsy, Free Kitten, and others. The music really resonated with me on a raw, pure level that I had never felt with any other kind of music. I'd always wondered why music was so male-dominated and why most people I knew, including myself, could not even name more than five female artists. This soon changed for me when I began discovering all these different Riot Grrrl bands that were completely life-changing.

I became a bigger fan of punk and realized that nobody should be dictating to me what "good" music is. Punk is about freedom of expression against an oppressive society; it is not about making the Billboard Top 40 or having the best American Idol-type voice. I loved how Riot Grrrl took punk music and attitudes, combined them with their own feminist ideologies, and created a revolution in the process.

Many of the song lyrics, to this day, give me chills, because they talk

about such important issues, like domestic violence, sexual assault, etc. These are topics people do not want to talk about, because it's not happy, but it's reality. People that claim that sexism is over should visit a local domestic violence shelter. The same shit that was going on in the early 90s in terms of violence against women is still happening today, which is why Riot Grrrl's ideas live on. (Violence against women is just one example of the sexism that still continues today.) Riot Grrrl was just so brilliant and inspirational on so many levels.

Other than the music, Riot Grrrl zines are one thing that encouraged me to be a zinester. I had never even heard of zines before I heard of Riot Grrrl. I went through this whole Riot Grrrl nostalgia phase, especially after I read Sara Marcus's genius book Girls to the Front: The True Story of the Riot Grrrl Revolution. (That book is literally my bible; I talk about it in my third issue.)

Anyway, I just wished that I could have been a teenager in the early 90s in Olympia or Washington DC. I kept wanting there to be some sort of Riot Grrrl revival, and I was probably really annoying the hell out of people talking about it. Haha! I was basically daydreaming and imagining an alternate life where I was a Mexican version of Kathleen Hanna, my feminist heroine. Then I sort of woke up and realized I could take the good out of Riot Grrrl (it was not perfect; it primarily pertained to middle-class white women) and create my own feminism. Soon afterwards, I made my daydreamsa reality on my own terms. I began organizing benefit concerts, making zines, jamming, and becoming politically involved with feminist organizations.

So, in conclusion, Riot Grrrl means a lot because it is what made me interested in feminism and zine subculture to begin with. It made feminism accessible and interesting to me. If it were not for Riot Grrrl, I may have not pursued Women's Studies or been the feminist activist and zinester I am today. I credit the movement for a lot of what I do, and you can see how heavily it has influenced me through my work.

SP!: Are you planning on making more zines?

DS: Absolutely! I am only getting started. I plan on continuing Muchacha with four issues a year, one every season. I have actually already decided my spring issue's theme, which is going to be "Brown Queen: Latina Voices of the 21st Century". I think this would be such an amazing thing: to gather Latina voices into one zine. It could serve as a historical time capsule of what Latina women's thoughts, stories, experiences, and art are like at this time in the world. I am really excited about the idea and will begin a callout for submissions online about it soon.

SP!: What do you think the appeal of handmade zines is for creators and customers?

DS: I think the appeal for creators is that you are hands-on creating a piece of art, which is how I conceptualize zines. As I just briefly mentioned, I also think of zines as a historical time capsule. I can look back at what I've written about as I get older and recall things that were going on in my life or in the world at specific times. So, not only are handmade zines a work of art that can serve as a time capsule, but they are also a medium in which you can express yourself in a unique way and share it with the world. It is a really satisfying feeling when you confidently know that what you created matters, and that it can serve to educate, help, or entertain others. For me, making a feminist handmade zine that talks about these concepts on a relatable level can be pretty powerful thing for customers who are interested—especially when feminist topics are so misunderstood in the mainstream. Customers can have access to literature that is created to make you feel empowered and give you ideas on how to make a difference in the world, as opposed to which celebrity is dating who and who looked better in a dress. Handmade zines can serve as an alternate print media, where we are challenging the status quo by addressing issues that are important to us, even if they are shunned by mainstream society. Political zinesters are rising against the oppressive powers that be by claiming that what we are creating is radical, meaningful, and should be taken seriously. I feel so fortunate to have discovered the underground culture of zines, and only wish I had known about it sooner. I strongly encourage everyone to make their own zines.

Weblinks:

- muchachafanzine.tumblr.com,
- wemakezines.ning.com/profile/DaisySalinas,
- http://www.etsy.com/shop/MuchachaFanzine,

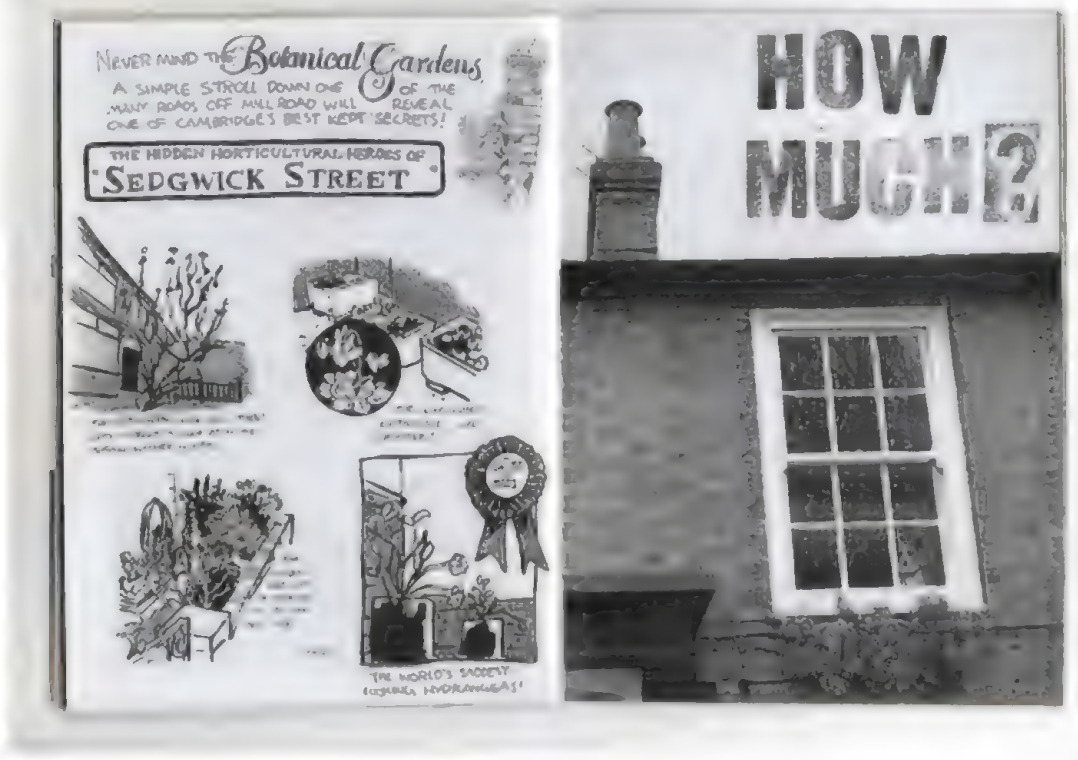
Alex Hahn Publishing

Alex Hahn Publishing is a small press, independent publisher of graphic and illustrative books, comics, and zines. Alex's output includes a serialized "diary comic" Post Conatus (also available as a graphic novel), prints and posters, digital books, handmade books, and comics.

SP! What are your zines about?

- Space Please! : In 2010, I made some editorial illustrations for BlueSci Magazine, for a very long and boring article about a space elevator. To counteract the dry text, I made some humorous pictures of a little spaceman determined to reach orbit by various alternate means. They made me laugh—but not the editor—as none got used, so I re-worked them into this set of zine/posters. I'd also always wanted to play with that simple "eight pages out of a single folded and cut sheet" format.

Details: 8 pages, folds out into an A4 poster, comes in a set of 3 (each a different color; comics are the same, but posters are different), print run 100 (numbered). An experimental zine/poster set about one man's attempts to reach the stars. "One copy to read, one to display, and one to give a friend or any combination thereof..."


NEVER MIND THE Botanical Gardens
A SIMPLE STROLL DOWN ONE OF THE MANY ROADS OFF MILL ROAD WILL REVEAL ONE OF CAMBRIDGE'S BEST KEPT SECRETS!
THE HIDDEN HORTICULTURAL HEROES OF
SEDGWICK STREET
HOW MUCH?

• "When I Think of Cambridge…": To raise funds and promote our final-year degree show, I organized two class publications to sell in Cambridge. I felt the diverse range of work between myself and my peers was best displayed in a zine, where you expect the eclectic (and I also knew many people wouldn't have time to create new work; this all-inclusive format let them participate by submitting sketches and work from other projects). It was also a lot of fun to get a small group of us together in a production line to assemble the books.

Details: 40 pages + cover, saddle stitched, print run of 35; there is a cut-out in the cover with hand-stamped turn-wheel (each one is different). Various contributors share their thoughts, stories, and artwork relating to their time studying at Cambridge University.

• Book of 15 Prints by Cambridge School of Art Illustration Students: To complement and contrast with the zine, I wanted to make a lavish publication of full-color prints. This was quite a technical challenge to produce, and quite expensive (we broke even, but didn't make much profit), but since I was footing the bill, I was happy for it to become more of a passion project.

Details: various contributors, 15 pages + covers, Japanese stab-bound, print run of 15. Limited edition book of digital prints made by final year students of the Cambridge School of Art BA (Hons) Illustration course.

• What a lot of Blop!': To me, one of the main differences between a zine and a small press book is that zines don't need to have any narrative or sequence to them, rather they're a collection of interesting things in a bound format. This zine does have a narrative running throughout, but it is of my experience reading The Alchemist, which is a book by Paulo Coelho that I really didn't like. Rather than defacing the book, I just wanted to make it amusing by drawing my character, Blop, on every page doing any and all sorts of activities.

Details: 20 pages + cover, A5, green staples, print run 100 copies. Blop—everyone's favourite Martian—makes his printed début in 'What a lot of Blop!' The illustrations were drawn on a book which Alex Hahn had to read as part of a course, but did not enjoy. So he up-cycled it, drawing Blop on every page, tearing them out, scanning them and putting them together in a zine.

SP! How do you make your zines?

AH: The main method of reproduction available to me is the copy center at my university, so my projects are usually made with this in mind—or sometimes with the question, "What can I do with this process?"

My works all have to be in black-and-white, to keep costs manageable, but in Space Please, for example, I used different papers to make it more exciting (and colorful!). For What a lot of Blop! I overcame the limitation of only printing in black and white by painting in the character's eyes on each cover with tipp-ex. This makes it stand out and feels more like a design choice than a restriction.

I like to be able to make all the copies of each zine in one go, taking an evening or two to sit and staple/cut/fold/stick/stitch/etc each one in a kind of one-man assembly line, until they're all done.

SP! What inspired you to make a handmade zine?

AH: I always wanted to make my own comics and sell them, so when I saw a way I could make books using the technology available, I felt really liberated. I made a book of cartoons before I really knew what a zine was, so at the time, it was just a simple way I could make a book; but then, learning about the other zines that are out there, and finding out that people collect these, inspires me to make more—and investigate it as an art form and not just as functional and cheap.

SP! Will you be making more zines?

AH: Absolutely! I've made big plans for the next year. As I have several projects in the works and ideas that have been brewing for some time, I want to publish a book, comic, or zine each month throughout 2013. It might not end up being every month exactly, and I'm not going to rush something out just to make that total, but I reckon trying to put 12 new publications out there is a good goal to have.

As far as individual titles, I am definitely going to be releasing Post Conatus Volume Two (along with two small Post Conatus

zines), a little book about Blop fighting the 2012 Olympic mascot, and a collection of short comics. I'm keen to do something very drawing-based, like a sketch book of Cambridge, but that is just one idea among many!

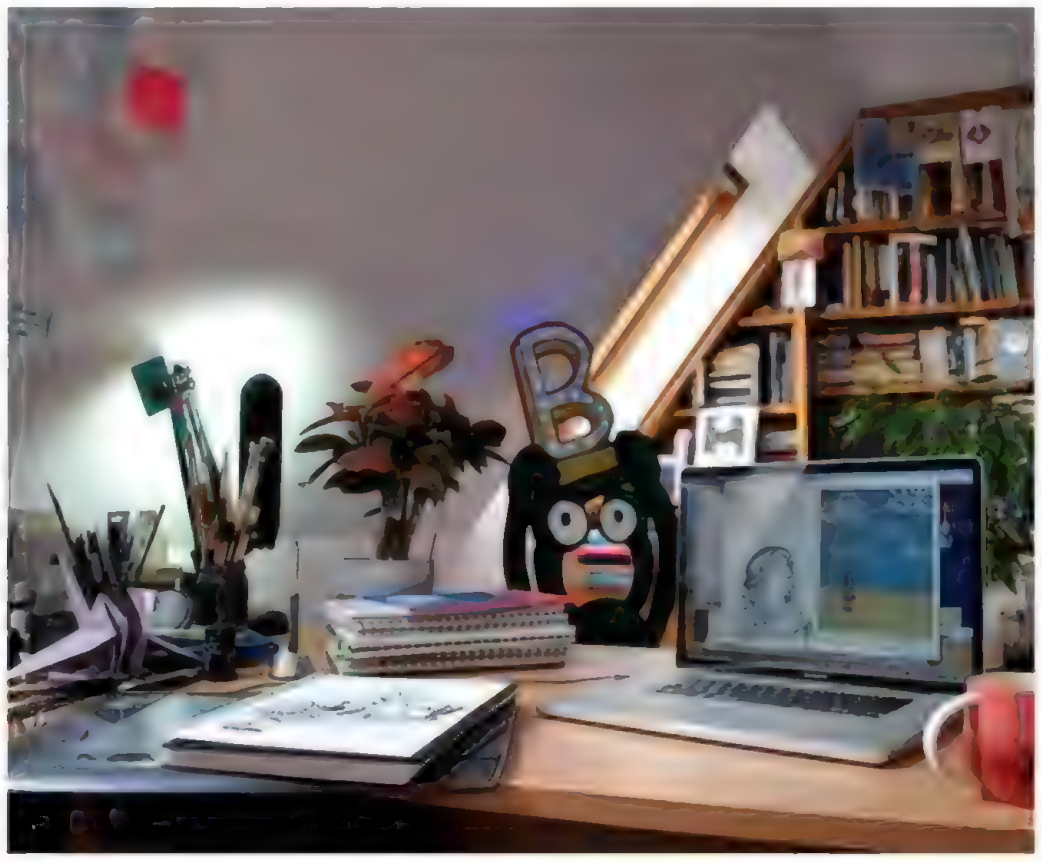
SP! Where do you sell your work?

AH: My So far, most of my business has been through my Etsy store or in-person. I have had some books on sale in Gosh! Comics in London, so whenever I'm in town, I take a selection there. My goal for the next year is to attend some conventions and fairs as an exhibitor and actually try selling my work in that setting. I always seem to hear about these events the day before or after they're held!

SP! Do you have to market your handmade stuff differently from your other works?

AH: Actually, it's fairly similar—at least right now. My publishing 'company' is still in its infancy. So the main difference between one of my small-press books, like What a lot of Blop! and titles released through Alex Hahn Publishing—for example, my 100-page autobiographical graphic novel, Post Conatus—is just assigning an ISBN. I make all copies of Post Conatus by hand—it actually takes much longer than any other book I've made.

I sometimes feel that with my independently-published work, mentioning it's 'handmade' can make it feel a little more unique—precisely one of the zine qualities that interests me. I want there to be a bit of an overlap with my work, so you can think of my published works as big zines. I think that if I make a book that just gets printed and delivered to me, fully-made, in boxes, I might feel a bit disconnected from it.



Alex Hahn's workspace

Weblinks:

- www.alexhahnpublishing.com/
- www.etsy.com/shop/alexhahnillustrator
- www.alexhahnillustrator.com (my professional portfolio)
- www.postconatus.com (an ongoing diary-comic)
- www.amazon.co.uk/Alex-Hahn/e/B003GQY380/ref=ntt_dp_epwbk_0

The Ink is the Life

Noah Pierce makes comics zines and screen-printed clothing. His zines are about the creative process. He began drawing and experimenting with different artistic mediums at a very young age. At the age of 18, two years after he dropped out of high school and had been "circulating around drug and DYS rehabilitation centers," Noah's sister was killed. He walked away from his old habits and old friends, he got his portfolio together and he got into art school. He also started editing a zine. However, he did not like art school; it was not what he'd hoped for. He lost his scholarship. Then he joined the circus. "I've had my trials and tribulations, but ultimately, the only important thing is that I've survived to continue making art." He now splits his time between creating and selling his artwork (zines, and various items he designs and screen-prints), construction, and occasional circus work.

He currently publishes two series: Decoder Ring, and The Enksperiment, as well as collaborating with other creators.

SP!: What are your zines about?

NP: The Decoder Ring series is basically a visualization of how my mind generates new ideas— or the product of a lifetime of honing my doodling skills. There are 12, so far. Generally, they don't have a story or even a unifying theme, but some definitely do. A lot of the images are kind of visual puns, or things that don't make sense when you first look at them (in some cases, they will never make sense, and that's kind of the point). Some are pattern or ink experiments, some are little bits of prose, and some are twisted artistic, historical, or literary references. It can get a bit out there...

I started making the Decoder Rings when I was living out in Colorado, in 2009. I had been on tour, doing big top rigging with Circus Smirkus in New England over the summer, and headed west to see what Burning Man was all about, afterwards. A couple of my friends and I stayed out in the southwest for a while after that—between California, Vegas, Boulder, and SLC, picking up various manual labor jobs, and basically

bumming around in our truck that we'd painted to look like a log cabin. But besides painting that truck, I had barely done any art at all. So I came up with a way to make minicomics out of a piece of notebook paper: three cuts and a staple, and you've got 16 pages (including a front and back cover). It worked great—first, because I've always tended to draw small, detailed doodles, and second, because I could draw all over a piece of paper, photocopy it double-sided and, with minimal effort, have a little book. Also at 4.25"x2.75", they were small enough that I could have my pockets full of them, and use them to trade for stuff, or as a mind-meltingly memorable business card, or give 'em away with the shirts I sell, or just sell 'em for a buck (or six for $5). People love things that cost a dollar. Almost as much as they love free stuff.

The Enksperiment series is a much more in-depth comic. For starters, it is drawn on 11"x14" bristol board (or scratchboard), and shrunk by my printers to be distributed in 8.5"x11" books. When I work at that size, I have the space available to make a much more densely-saturated image, and so I also made a much more densely-saturated story to go with it. The over-arching theme is quite simple though; as a creative person, what you create creates you. That may sound like a bogus explanation, but I assure you, it's that simple.

Originally, my friend and I started a comic zine back in 2005 called Inklings Komikazine. It only lasted a couple issues, but it gave me the idea for The Enksperiment, and I'd been tinkering with how to get this comic back to that idea of a comic/art zine collective. What I came up with was making The Enksperiment a mythological reimagining of how the Inklings Komikazine came to be… and how it will be in the future.

The first Enksperiment was done in 2007 and is just six pages long, plus the covers. It introduces Friedrich, a mad scientist character, tasked by "the Harvester"—a motivational monster (GOD) that he created for himself—to create a drug or formula (ENK+) that will generate stories in the form of comics. It introduces the concept of "static worlds," where there are a setting and characters, but no storyteller dictating any action. There are an infinite number of these, and an infinite number within them, and beyond them. However, I don't get further than mentioning them as "static worlds" in the first one.

The concept of the static worlds and the human "catalyst" is my interpretation of the creative struggle, and that's the crux of the whole Enksperiment series. As far as comics go, the ink and the empty page are portals to static worlds, but without a catalyst to unite them, all that potential is useless.

In The Enksperiment Part 2 (which packs a maniacal visual barrage into its 13 pages), Friedrich overdoses on the drug he's trying to create for the Harvester, and he's thrown into multiple static worlds at once, which threaten to tear him apart. He then tries to destroy the drug by returning it to the "Inkwell," but he finds himself still under its effect… much to the Harvester's delight.

In the most recent installment of The Enksperiment (Part 3), the ENK+ that Friedrich attempted to destroy in the Inkwell starts to congeal into a sentient creature—a manifestation of the ink that is aware of its need for the pen… and the catalyst. So the "inkling" emerges from the Inkwell to find catalysts in the surface world. The narrative is then dominated by short stories of the individual catalysts that the inkling's tendrils find to absorb stories from. This is how the story loops back into the idea of the comic zine, and will continue into Part 4, where the emphasis will be more on individual stories until The Enksperiment can again become "Inklings Komikazine".

SP! : Where do you sell your work?

NP: I sell my comics (and my t-shirts) pretty much anywhere I can. When we finished the first issue of Inklings, we printed up a bunch, stapled 'em together, and headed to the Boston ComicCon with our backpacks full (and some dumb sign we made). It's a stretch to say we sold as many as half a dozen there, but the seed was planted. Over the years since I've started selling my own stuff, I've teamed up with other comics creators/illustrators from time to time (Adam Szymczak of goodshowsir.com, Julian Fine of flimflamradio.com, Davis Fowlkes of wholeexcrement.tumblr.com) to sell our wares on the street and at various comic conventions (whether or not we had a table). I've only done a few "legitimate" table spots (Boston's MICE, NYC's MOCCA, and Maine's MeCAF), but I've hawked my stuff on numerous street corners or outside other conventions. I made myself a wooden briefcase that folds out into a cigarette box-style display, which I wore around

the MoCCA convention in 2010, after I finished the second part of The Enksperiment, and I still use it. Some of us are planning to head down to SPX in Maryland in 2013. I really enjoy selling stuff directly to people, but most of the business I've done over the past year has been through my shop at Etsy.com (theINKistheLIFE). I can reach a much broader audience online, and I don't have to worry about getting asked to leave a sidewalk by the fuzz because I don't have a permit.

SP! : Are you planning on making more zines?

NP: I'm always planning on making new stuff. Whether or not I actually end up doing it is the hard part… but there will be at least one more Enksperiment to segue back into the Inklings Komikazine, and I've started working on new Decoder Rings (although that's not really a priority). Hopefully, once Inklings is back up and running, it can attract more artists, and we'll have a rebirth of the comic zine we dreamed up in the first place. As to other topics, the idea of The Enksperiment is so vast that it would kind of include anything else I do.

SP! : What do you think the appeal of handmade zines is for creators and customers over standard comics?

NP: I think the best part of getting a comic or zine is getting it from someone who really worked on it, invested themselves in it, and ultimately made it for themselves, but wanted to share it with the world. Even if only a few people ever see it. It gets so much less personal on the large scale, despite the writers and artists being "at the top of their game"; you know it's not like every copy of Spider-Man was touched by Stan Lee. That's not to say the stories can't be personal, but the experience is different, and therefore the community is different.

Weblink: http://www.etsy.com/shop/theINKistheLIFE

Memo Illustration

Helen Memo's works include hand-drawn and screen-printed illustrations, self-published zines, greetings cards, hand-printed stationery, limited edition prints, tote bags and accessories. She also teaches a range of workshops including intro to screen-printing and zine-making.

SP!: What are your zines about?

- Lost and Found: 32 pages, screen-printed and thread-bound, created in collaboration with Katie Haegele (www.thelalatheory.com). This is a 2-in-1 zine, both covers are front covers. One side tells stories of found things, the other tells stories of lost things.

SP: What was its print run/reprint available?

HM: I'm not sure! I've screen-printed three batches of covers for Lost and Found zine, of which I sent half to Katie and then we each assembled a bunch of zines. I print a new color-way each time; the zine is still ongoing...

- Collections: A series of 10-page, A6, screen-printed and thread-bound zines, looking at their creators' various collections. Issue 1 has paper drinks coasters from the 1950s–1970s and Issue 2 covers pottery dogs.

SP: What was its print run/reprint available?

HM: I screen-printed 50 of each issue; when they're gone they're gone.

- Coffee: 10 pages, A6, screen-printed and thread-bound zine. All about coffee.

SP: What was its print run/reprint available?

HM: I reprint Coffee periodically; it's ongoing.

- Animals on the Road: 10 pages, A6, screen-printed and thread-bound. The zine was created to coincide with a Girls Who Draw exhibition called Travelling Menagerie at the Here and Now gallery in Falmouth, in July 2010. It's full of all the animals that would be in Helen Memo's menagerie (if she had one) including a marmot, a fennec fox, and a puffin...

SP!: What was its print run/reprint available?

HM: Again this zine is reprinted every now and then.

SP!: How do you make your zines and what materials do you use?

HM: My zines start out as an idea, usually taken from a theme that I've been been working with recently—and then, I get other ideas about that theme that I need to get down on paper. I also use little zines as a way to generate ideas for new work, or to help clear a creative block.

When I have a zine all drawn out, I work out how many colors would do it justice as a screen-printed piece and then hand-print a run of up to 50 copies onto really nice recycled paper.

SP!: Where do you sell your work ?

HM: I sell my work in lots of places. I've got almost 50 stockists in bricks-and-mortar shops in the UK, Europe, Canada, the US, and Australia, and I'm always on the lookout for new shops! Alongside this, I sell my wares via Etsy and Not on the High Street (http://www.notonthehighstreet.com/memoillustration), and at art markets and zine fairs across the UK. I keep a little list of where I'll be selling at next on my blog.

SP!: Would you recommend Not on the High Street ?

HM: Not on the High Street is great. It's opened my work up to a whole new audience. In terms of zines, I've tried out a couple on

there, so far, but these I also bill as coloring books. I'm gradually introducing my full range of zines to the site; I do think they need a bit of explaining, as not everyone knows what to make of them! We'll get there...

SP!: Are you planning on making more zines: for current series and other topics?

HM: I've just made a new mini zine about my kitchen. It was an idea-generator for new products one day, when I hit a bit of a wall (not literally). I've just screen-printed a few copies and I'm pleased with how they've turned out. The kitchen zine led to the making of my new 'Atomic' recipe card packs and a new Kitchen-themed print.

SP!: What do you think the appeal of handmade zines is for creators and customers?

HM: I think people enjoy reading what other people have to say. And there's nothing better than a limited edition run in which every copy is slightly different, and so unique in its own way. Bland mass-produced items don't possess this element of surprise; handmade zines are special! Zines are empowering for the creator, in the sense that they allow you to make exactly what you want to make, you can do it yourself—and if someone enjoys your zine, well, that's just an added bonus!!

Weblinks:

- www.hellomemo.com,
- http://www.etsy.com/shop/memohelen,
- http://www.notonthehighstreet.com/memoillustration

Art Eye Candy (Rachelle Panagarry)

Rachelle Panagarry makes original art, art prints, tote bags, token chicks, ceramic candy, and zines, and offers mixed media workshops. She is a qualified teacher, with degrees in fashion design and print-making. Her work has been published in Suzi Blu's Mixed Media Girls book (2012) and has been exhibited in the US and UK.

SP!: What are your zines about?

RP: Art Eye Candy Art Zine; Ways To Create': 6 pages, mixed media art printed onto cardstock, embroidery silk-bound, embellished with a 'one of a kind' shrinky dink and beads. It is the first in a series of art-themed zines.

I've decided to make my zines about fun aspects of making art and ways to get creative. They started as something fun just for me to make, but turned into something quite popular, so much so that I get special requests for them now.

The print run is small right now, as I print from home. Issue 1 was 25 copies.

SP!: What is a "shrinky dink"?

RP: A 'shrinky dink' is basically shrink plastic that is decorated, and then heated until it shrinks! I like to add these on to each little zine, and every one of them is unique.

SP!: How do you make your zines?

RP: I made my zine 'original' by using the origami book method, which is basically a folded piece of paper that becomes a book. The size of the finished book depends on the size of paper that you start with. Currently, I like to use an A4 size to create a mini zine. There is no real binding involved with this method, but you could bind a few together to make more pages. I do, however, stitch up the spine for decorative purposes, as well as a way to keep it all together.

SP!: Where do you sell your work?

RP: I sell my work on Etsy http://www.etsy.com/shop/ArtEyeCandy, and also sell larger pieces at my website http://www.rachellepanagarry.com.

SP!: What does a printmaking degree entail?

RP: A printmaking degree is very practical, with much more 'hands on' stuff than essays (which I don't enjoy). You cover different techniques, such as etching, lino printing, and silkscreen. I specialized in silkscreen and monoprints for my degree, but as a student, you get to opt for the style and technique that interests you the most.

SP!: What do your workshops entail? Do you give courses, online, or in person?

RP: I love to teach workshops, both in person and online, through my teaching website.

My online classes consist of video tutorials, written instruction, PDFs, and inspiration videos from YouTube to support the theme of each session. The classes are a 'learn at your own pace' style, and can be accessed any time you wish.

My in-person classes cover any arty topic that's been asked for. I cover mixed media techniques, art journaling, doodling, anything really. It's great to teach face-to-face.

SP!: Are you planning on making more zines?

RP: I'm planning on a few zines, like I said, they will be about different ways to be creative from a 'no stress' point of view.

SP!: What do you think the appeal of handmade zines is for creators and customers?

RP: My customers love the little zines—especially that they are handwritten, rather than typed—and also, the little touches like the shrinky dinks. They like the fact that they are different and unique to the maker, and it's not something that you can just pick up anywhere.

I love making them for the 'fun' aspect and the fact that using this method makes it quick!

Weblinks:

- http://www.rachellepanagarry.com/
- http://arteyecandyworkshop.weebly.com/
- http://www.etsy.com/shop/ArtEyeCandy , There are some instructional videos on Art Eye Candy TV: http://www.arteyecandy.com/p/art-eye-candy-tv.html

Further Reading:

- http://www.wemakezines.com
- http://www.undergroundpress.org/pdf/Zines101.pdf
- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zine
- http://tanglecrafts.wordpress.com/free-stuff/zines/mini-zines/
- http://handmadeboundnashville.wordpress.com/zines/
- http://www.undergroundpress.org/about-zine-world/

Based on the hit underground comic book. Brand new hip-hop cartoon web series.
Starring Chappelle Show & Patrice O' Neal alums, Wil Sylvince & Dante Nero. With original music by DJ Wally Pish Posh (Alicia Keys, Luscious Jackson)
Created, written & animated by Leesa Dean
chilltownTV.com

EVIL WAYS
A HAROLD PALMER THRILLER
BOBBY NASH
DEADLY GAMES!
SAMARITAN
A NOVELLA BY BOBBY NASH
EARTHSTRIKE AGENDA
A NOVEL BY BOBBY NASH
LANCE STAR SKY RANGER
ONE SHOT!
BEN BOOKS
Do you like suspense, thrills, action, horror, adventure, and excitement?
Author Bobby Nash and BEN Books have a few suggestions for you.
bobbynash.com * BEN-Books.blogspot.com

SELF PUBLISHER HALL of FAME

By Ian shires

For the past few months, I have concentrated my research and efforts into discovering and reporting on the current state of the publishing industry. And, for the most part, I've come to the conclusion that the more things change, the more they stay the same. My conclusions are mostly centered on the thought that there is no "one solution" right now, and that the Self Publisher Association, as a whole, needs to spend some time in our forum talking and developing new tools to make things better. And so, in the magazine, I'm going to turn my attention to my pet project: the SP! Hall of Fame.

I have been quietly working on updates to the entries already in the Archives section for a couple of months, now. It's cut into the time I have for doing reviews, and I apologize to publishers waiting for me to review their work. I am trying to get more reviewers in our stable, but it really seems like reviews are a lost art that no one is much interested in. I don't see many websites spotlighting reviews of even mainstream things. I'm sure I've overlooked a few spots, but I just don't see where there is any really solid place people are going to find out about new things. I say that knowing that the SP! site is ready for such action... we're just not getting the visitors. And I don't see anywhere else getting them, either.

So, I'm slipping into this "build it, they will come" mentality, knowing I can't do everything that needs done alone. My reviewing a bunch of books is all well and good, but we NEED a dozen people ALL reviewing a bunch of books each to really give the world a picture of what's coming out that's good and worth supporting. So, if I work on the backbone of the archives, and add the 3000+ names and companies to the system that I have records for, our becoming more complete may lead the way to more people taking things seriously and joining in to build this place to what it should be. If a person sees a list with 30 names on it as our record of creators in the F's page... are they going to want to be on that list as much as if they see 300 names on that list? Building the Hall of Fame records of who has done what is imperative for making sure that more and more people will want to see the whole system carry on long after I am gone, you are gone, etc. It's stuff History should not forget. And it won't compile itself.

I am about a third of the way to having things ready to update into the live archives. So, as you can gauge, I'm still months away from actually posting new pages; the 3000+ names of people and companies are all still being processed into the new setup from an old source. I think, when I am done with THIS update, I will have MORE new data from some new sources to add, which will also take time to process. Not to mention, new updates that have been submitted through the online forms. All of this equals a project that is going to be ongoing and never complete, and yet more important as it continues to grow.

So what is my goal with this article? I think awareness is the main thing. You all need to know what I am doing on a daily basis to improve SP! and everything else that is going on here. We who are working on this magazine and who are involved in the Self Publisher Association are volunteers. I'm not getting paid to do this, and I don't expect to see that change. If anything here ever makes $$, I always end up using that $$ to improve things and, as far as this magazine goes, I have pledged to see article writers start getting paid for their work long before I ever think about paying myself even pizza $$. I have the luxury of not needing to turn a profit to keep this all going. All I need is the support of people who want to make sure it keeps getting built. To that end, I think we can ALL do ourselves a really huge favor, simply by telling our friends, colleagues, and anyone else the importance of what we are doing. Getting more readers here to read things. Getting more volunteers to offer to do something, anything, here. I don't know where everyone is these days. Facebook? It's a maze and stuff posted there is fleeting. I probably don't see one third of the things my friends post, and the things I do are gone from my "feed" in a couple hours. So, while it's certainly a tool we need to use these days, it certainly is NOT conductive to making sure everyone's work is not lost in the shuffle. I don't NEED to know where everyone is these days. I just need those that I do know to help make sure more and more people know about what we are doing. As we all pull together, we can really keep the movement in this movement.

Want to make sure YOU are in the Archives? http://www.selfpubmag.com/HOF/start.htm

LAST WORDS

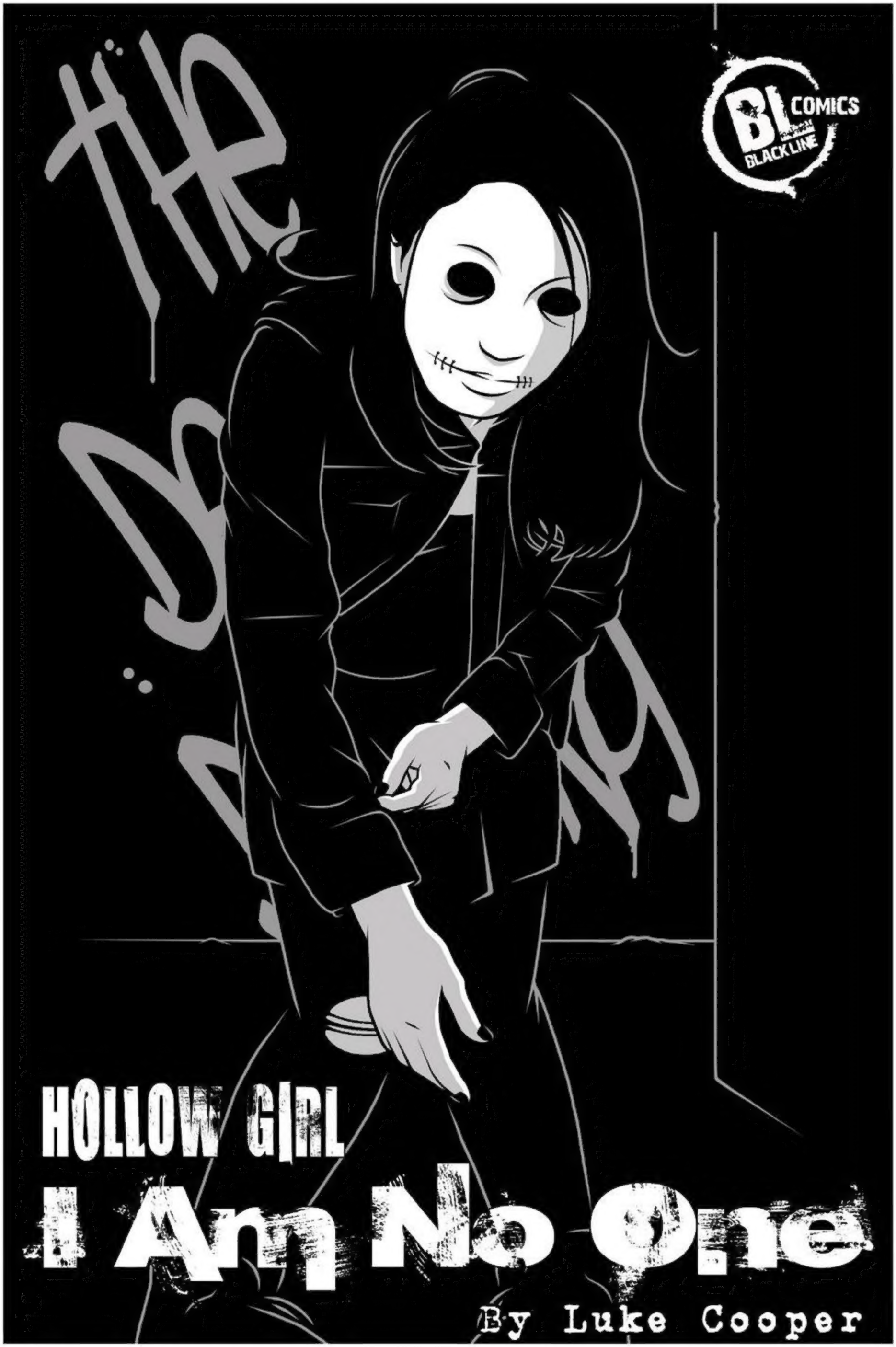
Jay Savage has worked in and around the comic book, film and video game industry as an artist for over 20 years. Jay is currently acting Publisher at Blackline Comics.

FIRST OF ALL thank you once again for reading and or contributing to Self Publisher Magazine! Just like last months issue we are making changes with every new issue in an effort to bring to you the best publication possible. With this issue you will notice some subtle changes like dumping the double page spreads and going back to a more reader friendly single page layout. We are also starting to implement more images through out the issue. While I continue to implement changes such a smoother flowing reading experience, we are implementing these changes slowly and relying solely on your feedback to help guide us in our work on future issues.

To that extent I encourage you to send either the Publisher Ian Shires or myself an email and express what it is you did or did not like about this issue. Equally welcomed are ideas for new sections you would like to see included in future issues. This magazine is a labor of love for the craft as we who work on this publication do it for the better of the Independent Comic Book industry. I myself am gearing up for a new edition to my family, as my wife of 16 years is about 3 weeks away from giving birth to our second child! So please do fill our inboxes with suggestions so when we return with the next issue we may make it even better than this one. Whatever you do keep creating and work at it feverishly as you are the ones who have built this industry and will continue to breathe new life into it for years to come. Upward and onward my friends!

Thank you again,

Jay Savage


BL COMICS
BLACK LINE
HOLLOW GIRL
I Am No One
By Luke Cooper